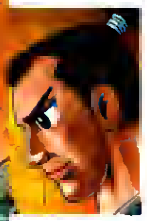
コミック

新田次郎原作

武田信玄

②戦国無情の巻

横山光輝



歴史コミック49

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武田信玄 2

横山光輝

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武田信玄 ②戦国無情の巻

甲斐の新領主・晴信は、家宝〝御旗楯無〟に相続の報告を行うよりも、おこの労咳を案じるのだが、時遅く、「風林火山」の手扇のみが遺されて……墓前で一晩中雨にぬれる晴信……高熱で意識不明の六日間……それを見舞う湖衣姫……

時に天文十一年(一五四二)七月、諏訪頼重・頼高は東光寺で壮烈な最期を遂げた。兄(晴信)を呪い、武田をうらみ続ける禰々は、夫頼重を追い、神代以来の諏訪家はここに滅びた。懸命に涙をこらえ戦国に生きた女性・湖衣姫は……

晴信(信玄)印章

武田信玄

TAKEDA SHINGEN

(2)

CRUELTY OF THE WARRING STATES

BY YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

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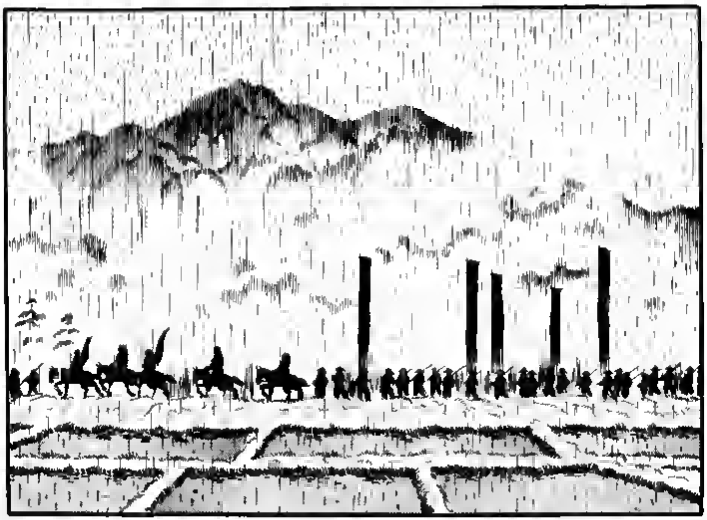
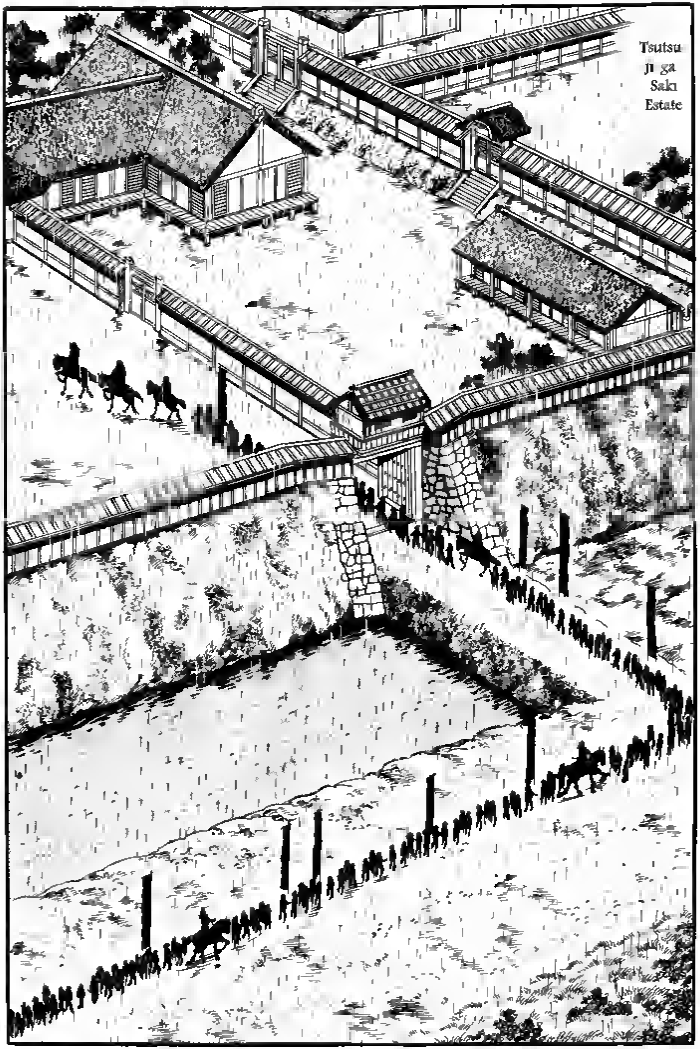
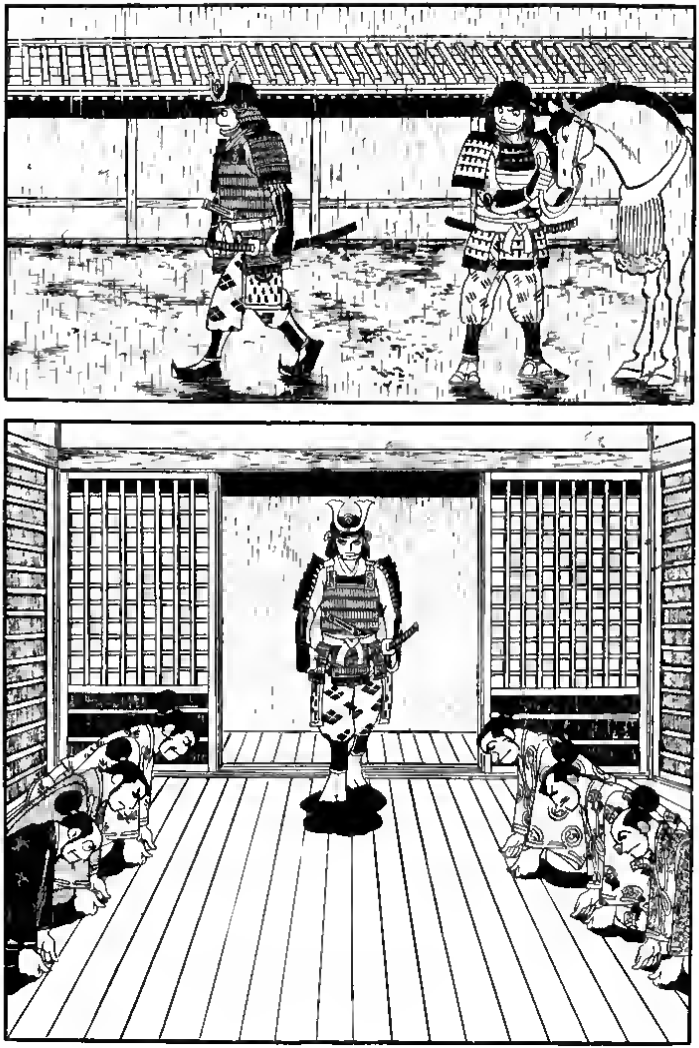
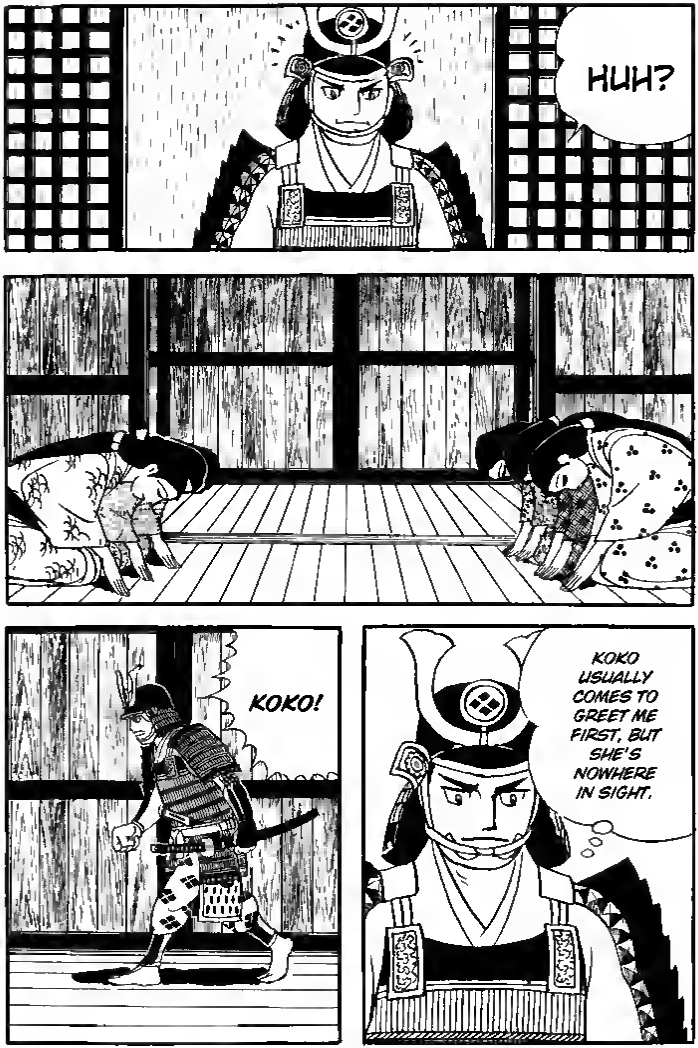
CHAPTER 10: KOKO'S TRAGEDY

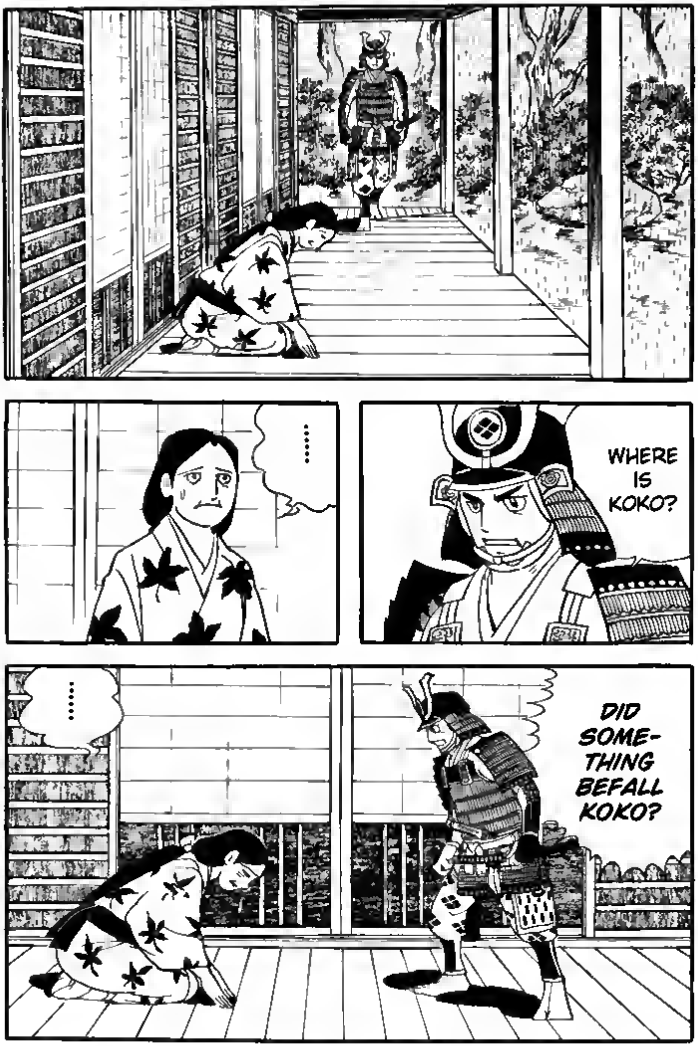


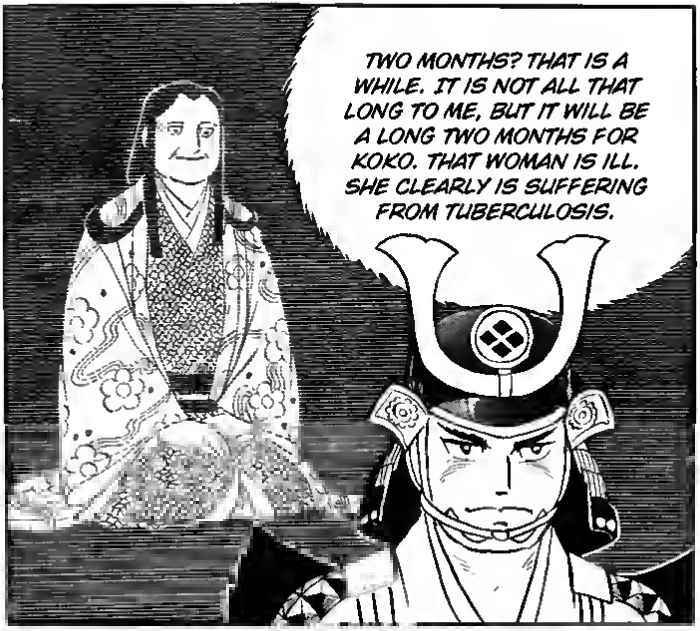
WHAT SORT OF STRATEGY SHALL WE TAKE AGAINST LORD SUWA? GIVE US YOUR ORDERS.
YES.
LORD HARUNOBU, YOU ARE NOW THE NEW LORD OF THIS DOMAIN.
DO AS NOBUKATA THINKS BEST.
I CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH YOU.
I AM OF HEAVY HEART, AS I HAVE JUST EXILED MY OWN FATHER, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS FOR THE GOOD OF THE CLAN. I REFUSE TO THINK OF WAR RIGHT NOW.


Tsutsu
ji ga
Saki
Estate




HUH?
KOKO!
KOKO USUALLY COMES TO GREET ME FIRST, BUT SHE'S NOWHERE IN SIGHT.


.....
WHERE IS KOKO?
.....
DID SOME-THING BEFALL KOKO?


TWO MONTHS? THAT IS A WHILE. IT IS NOT ALL THAT LONG TO ME, BUT IT WILL BE A LONG TWO MONTHS FOR KOKO. THAT WOMAN IS ILL. SHE CLEARLY IS SUFFERING FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

ENOUGH OF THE FORMALITIES. WHERE IS KOKO?
I AM VERY PLEASED TO SEE YOU HAVE RETURNED SAFELY.
YOU ARE THE NEW LORD OF KAI, LORD HARUNOBU. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS PROPER FOR YOU TO ACT SO FRIVOLOUSLY.

HOW DARE YOU!
I HAVE SENT KOKO TO THE HOT-SPRING VILLAGE UPSTREAM OF THE FUEFUKI RIVER ON ACCOUNT OF HER TUBERCULOSIS.
SPARE ME YOUR CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE! I DEMAND TO KNOW WHERE YOU HAVE TAKEN KOKO!
WHEN DID DECIDE TO DO THIS? HOW COULD YOU EVEN SUGGEST SUCH A THING WITHOUT CONSULTING ME FIRST?
I AM THE LEGAL WIFE OF LORD HARUNOBU, HEIR OF THE TAKEDA. ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS WITHIN YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS MY DUTY AS YOUR WIFE. I HAD NO OTHER OPTIONS. THUS SAID MY FATHER SANJO KINYORI, MINISTER OF THE LEFT.

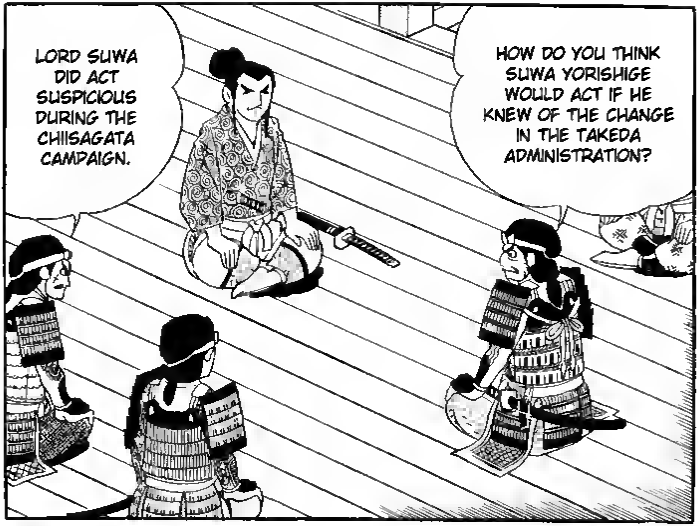
KYOTO AGAIN...
I HAVE ONLY ADHERED TO THE TEACHINGS OF MY FATHER. IF MY ADHERENCE TO KYOTO TRADITION IS NOT ACCEPTED HERE IN KAI, THEN SO BE IT. I AM PREPARED TO RECEIVE YOUR REBUKE.
FINE.

YES, MY LORD
BRING ME A HORSE!
I AM GOING TO VISIT KOKO IN THE HOT-SPRING VILLAGE OF KAWAURA, UPSTREAM OF THE FUEFUKI RIVER.
LORD HARUNOBU! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
IT IS ALL WELL FOR YOU TO VISIT LADY KOKO, BUT FIRST YOU MUST REPORT BEFORE THE SHIELDLESS ARMOR AND THE STANDARD (HEIRLOOMS OF THE TAKEDA CLAN) OF YOUR SUCCESSION OF THE TAKEDA CLAN!

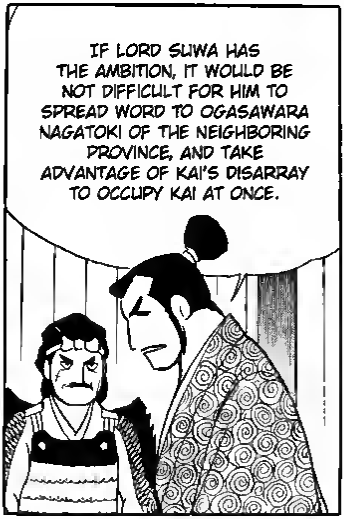
I AM CURRENTLY WORRIED ABOUT KOKO'S WELL-BEING THAN I AM ABOUT FORMALITY.
NOBUKATA, THAT IS SIMPLY A FORMALITY. AND FORMALITY SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH. THERE IS NO NEED FOR HASTE.
I LEAVE THE REST TO YOU, NOBUKATA.

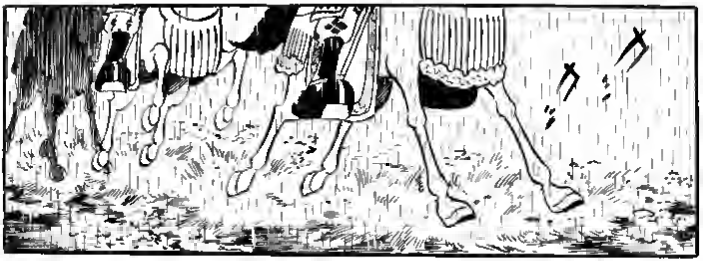
HE IS STILL YOUNG... BUT HIS YOUTH COULD BENEFIT THE PROVINCE OF KAI.
VERY WELL! I SHALL MAKE THE REPORT!

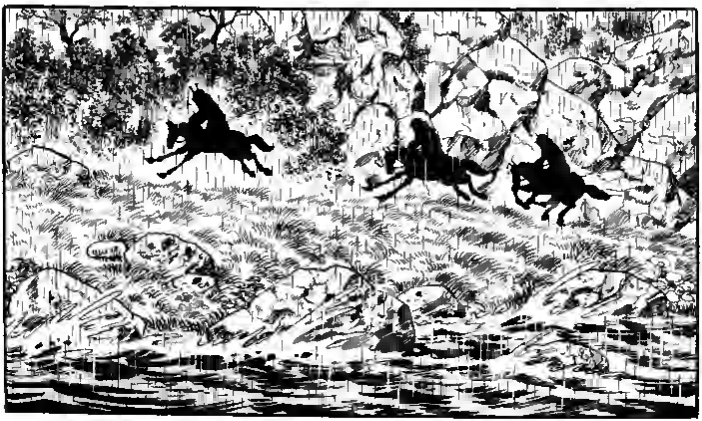
YES, SIR. HE HAS CHANGED DIRECTIONS, AND HAS RESTED HIS FORCES ON THE KAI BORDER.
WHAT? SUWA YORISHIGE HAS NOT WITHDRAWN TO UEHARA CASTLE?
...
HMMM...
IT WOULD SEEM LORD SUWA HAS NOTICED THAT THE MASTER HAS BEEN EXILED TO SURUGA

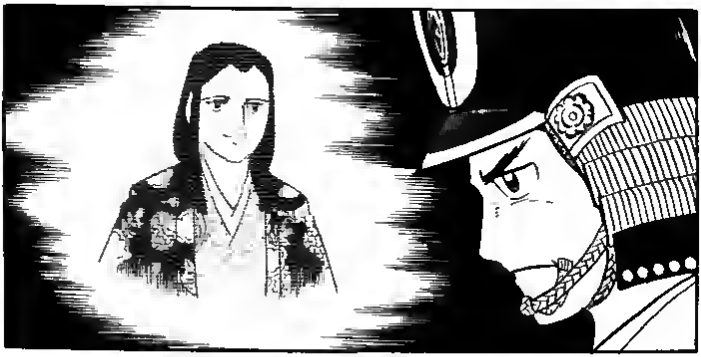

LORD SUWA DID ACT SUSPICIOUS DURING THE CHIISAGATA CAMPAIGN.
HOW DO YOU THINK SUWA YORISHIGE WOULD ACT IF HE KNEW OF THE CHANGE IN THE TAKEDA ADMINISTRATION?

VERY WELL. DO NOT TAKE YOUR SIGHT OFF THE SUWA FORCES ON THE BORDER.


IF LORD SUWA HAS THE AMBITION, IT WOULD BE NOT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO SPREAD WORD TO OGASAWARA NAGATOKI OF THE NEIGHBORING PROVINCE, AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF KAI'S DISARRAY TO OCCUPY KAI AT ONCE.







LORD HARUNOBU, I WILL NOT LIVE MUCH LONGER.
I CANNOT SAY WHY SOMETHING IS MAKING ME FEEL THIS WAY.
WHY WOULD YOU SAY SUCH A THING?
IF I ABAN-DONED YOU?
I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO LIVE IF YOU ABANDONED ME, LORD HARUNOBU. SO I MAY BE THINKING ABOUT THAT.

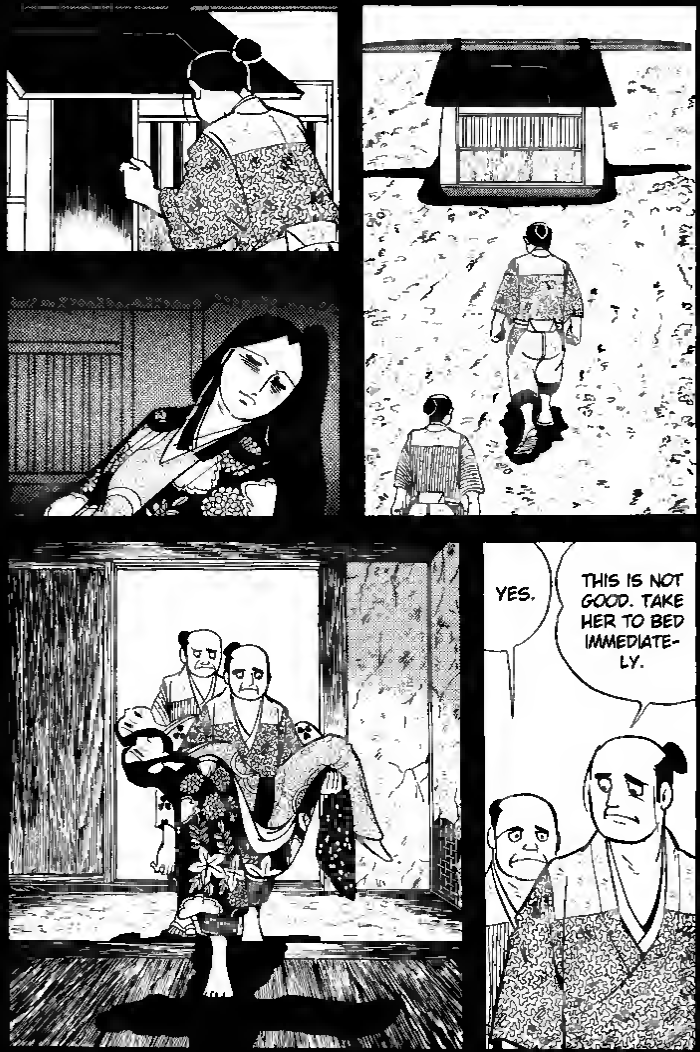
NO. I AM ALWAYS FILLED WITH THE HAPPINESS I WANTED. BUT ALL THE MORE...
ARE YOU NOT SATISFIED WITH THE LOVE I PROVIDE?

Village
of
Kaw-
aura

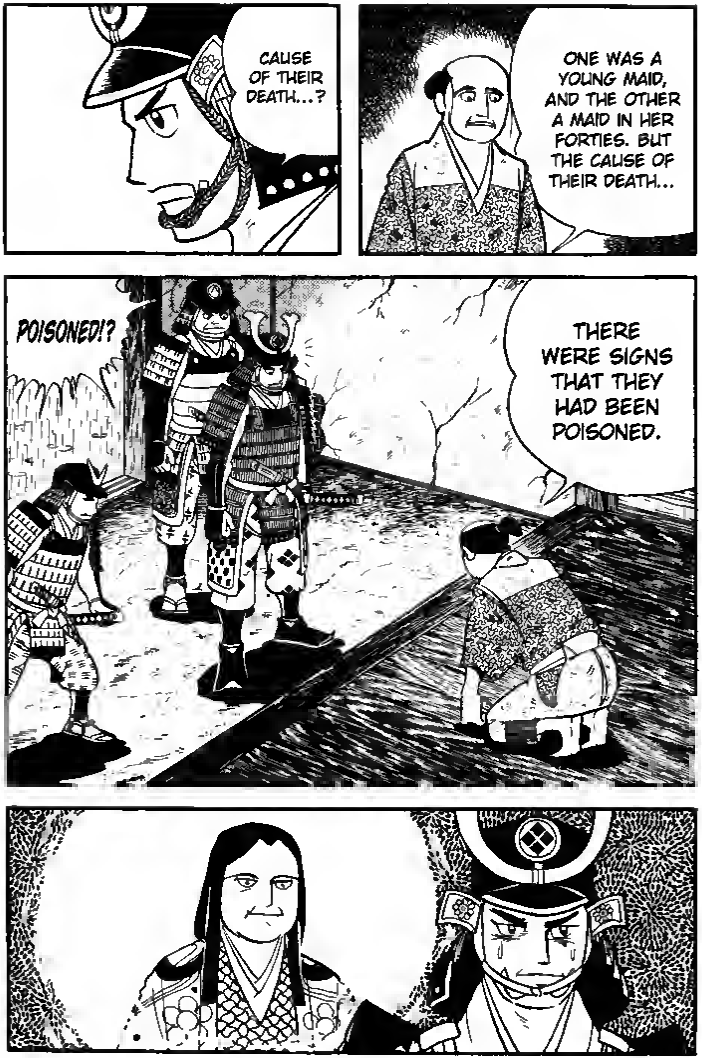
IS THERE ANYONE AROUND?
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO KOKO?
OHH, IF IT ISN'T LORD HARUNOBU!

A LADY OF MY CHAMBERS NAMED KOKO SHOULD BE IN THIS VERY VILLAGE FOR THE HEALING BATHS!
TO WHICH LADY KOKO DO YOU REFER?
Y-YES, MY LORD.
YOU KNOW HER?
WHAT ...?
COULD YOU MEAN HER...?
B-BUT SHE IS NO LONGER WITH US.
GOOD. SHOW ME TO HER.

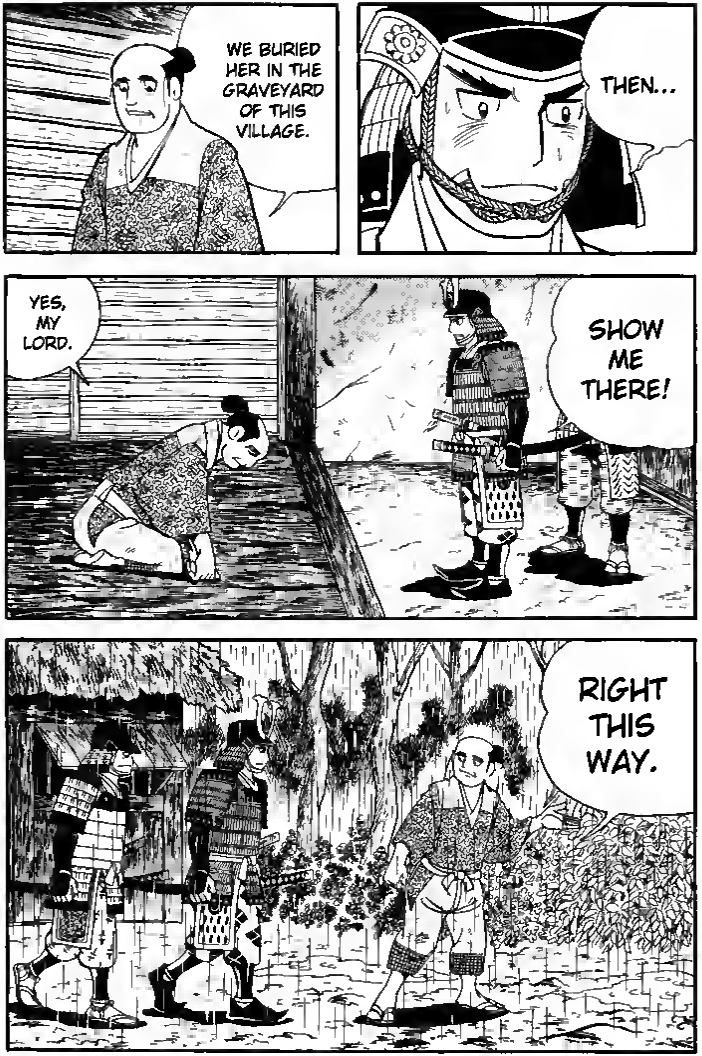
I DO NOT KNOW IF SHE WAS THIS LADY KOKO...
WHAT!?
But about a month ago, two woman's palanquins came here from Kofu.
YES, SIR.
THESE WOMEN ARE SEVERELY ILL! TREAT THEM WITH UTMOST CARE!


YES.
THIS IS NOT GOOD. TAKE HER TO BED IMMEDIATE-LY.

BUT BY THE TIME WE HAD LAID THEM TO REST, THEY HAD ALREADY PASSED ON.


CAUSE OF THEIR DEATH...?
ONE WAS A YOUNG MAID, AND THE OTHER A MAID IN HER FORTIES. BUT THE CAUSE OF THEIR DEATH...
POISONED!?
THERE WERE SIGNS THAT THEY HAD BEEN POISONED.

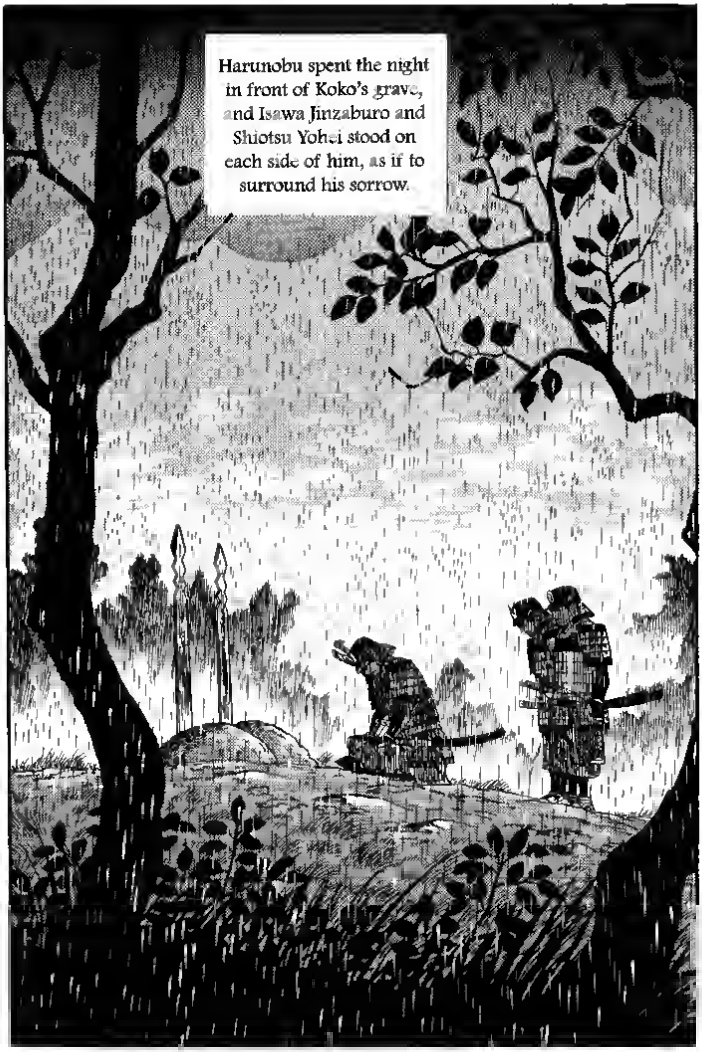
WE WERE AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT TO DO, SO WE INVESTIGATED THEIR BELONGINGS AND FOUND A FAN WITH YOUR SIGNATURE.
WE HURRIED TO INFORM THE SAMURAI, BUT THE SAMURAI WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.
YES, MY LORD.
DID IT SAY "WIND, FOREST, FIRE, MOUNTAIN" ON IT?
SO IT WAS HER AFTER ALL.
THAT WAS A FAN I GAVE TO KOKO!


WE BURIED HER IN THE GRAVEYARD OF THIS VILLAGE.
THEN...
YES, MY LORD.
SHOW ME THERE!
RIGHT THIS WAY.

HERE IT IS, MY LORD.
KOKO...

ガク

Anyone could tell that Koko had been poisoned by Lady Sanjo


Harunobu spent the night in front of Koko's grave, and Isawa Jinzaburo and Shiotsu Yohei stood on each side of him, as if to surround his sorrow.

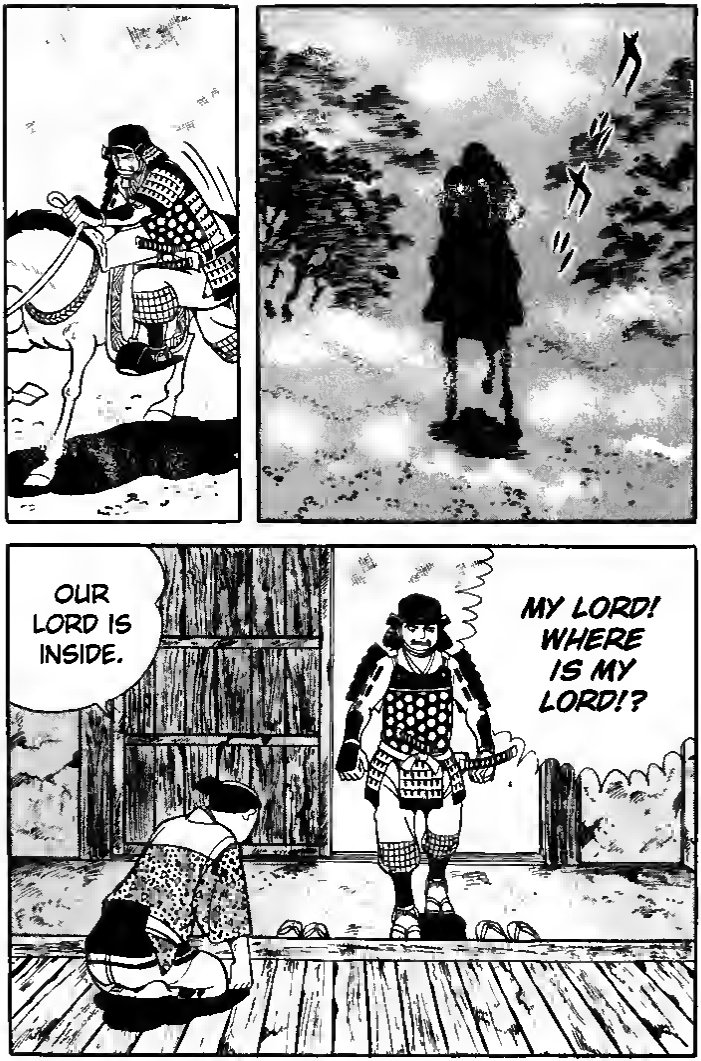
TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFREADING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CLEANED BY WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY KRA
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 10

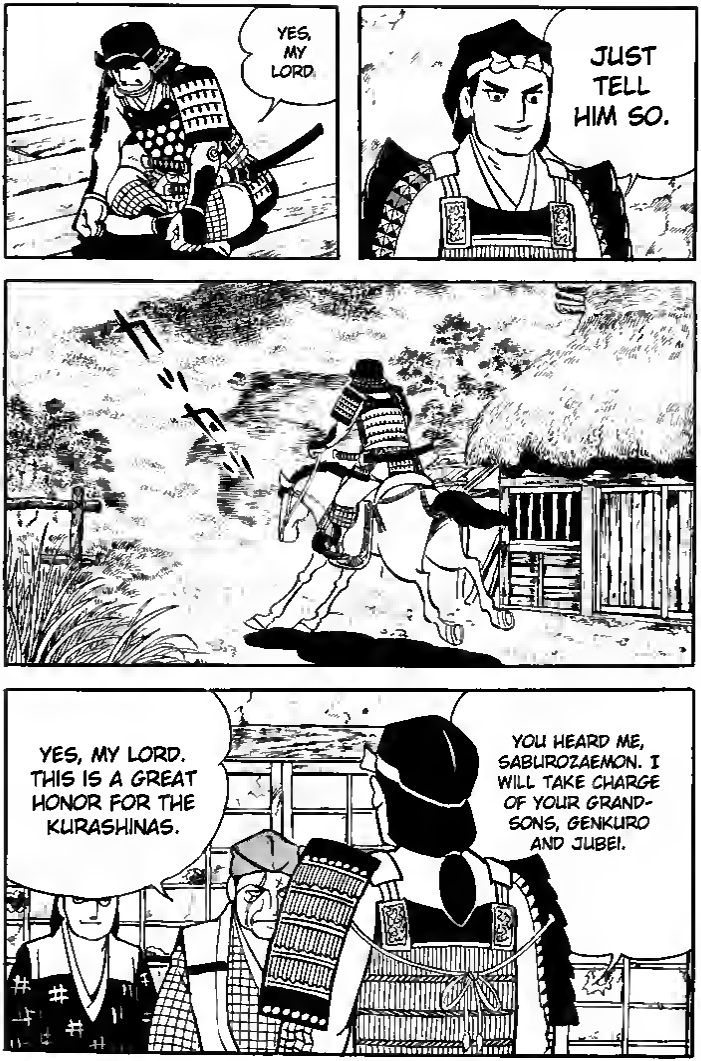
CHAPTER 11: HARUNOBU'S SCHEME

Hearing that Harunobu had come to visit the hot-spring village, the Kurashinas came one after another to pay their respects.
I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR VICTORY IN CHIISAGATA, MY LORD.
YES. THE UNNO ARMY SHOWED ABSOLUTELY NO RESISTANCE.


OUR LORD IS INSIDE.
MY LORD! WHERE IS MY LORD!?

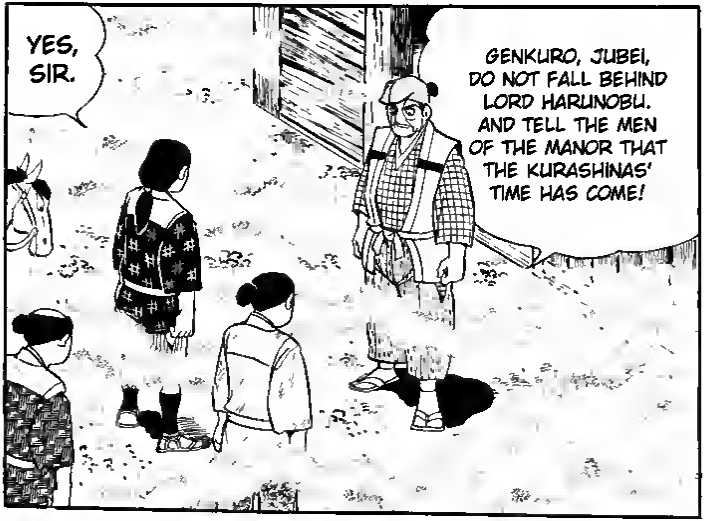
WHAT IS WRONG?
MY LORD! WE HAVE A CRISIS ON OUR HANDS!
WHAT!?
A COALITION ARMY OF LORDS SUWA AND OGASAWARA HAVE CROSSED THE BORDER INTO KAI!

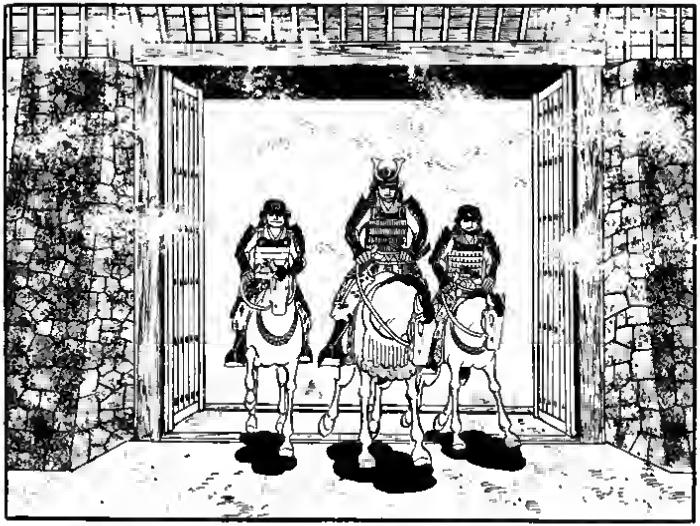
AND WHAT OF ITAGAKI NOBUKATA?
THEY NUMBER ABOUT THREE THOUSAND! THEY ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF CLOSING IN ON NIRASAKI AT ONCE!
I SEE. THEN INFORM NOBUTAKA THAT I WILL BREAK THROUGH THE ENEMY LINES WITH MY STANDARD BEARER AND A HUNDRED ELITE KURASHINAS, AND CAPTURE THE HEADS OF SUWA AND OGASAWARA, SO HE SHOULD RELAX RATHER THAN FIGHT A POINTLESS WAR.
ALL THE GENERALS, INCLUDING SIR ITAGAKI, HAVE ALREADY LEFT FOR THE FRONT, BUT HE INSISTS THAT YOU SHOULD MAKE YOUR RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
WITH JUST A HUNDRED MEN?


YES, MY LORD.
JUST TELL HIM SO.
YES, MY LORD. THIS IS A GREAT HONOR FOR THE KURASHINAS.
YOU HEARD ME, SABUROZAEMON. I WILL TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR GRAND-SONS, GENKURO AND JUBEI.

YOU PROTECT THE HORSES OF THE KURASHINA MANOR.
BY THE WAY, WHAT SHALL I, KURASHINA SABURO-ZAEMON, DO?
I WILL SEND FOR YOU WHEN I NEED YOU.
NO, I SIMPLY DON'T EVEN NEED TO RELY ON YOUR SERVICES.
IS THIS BECAUSE YOU THINK I AM TOO DECREPIT?
NOW LISTEN! WE WILL ATTACK THE ENEMY AS QUICK AS THE WIND! DO NOT FALL BEHIND!

ドッドッ


YES, SIR.
GENKURO, JUBEI, DO NOT FALL BEHIND LORD HARUNOBU. AND TELL THE MEN OF THE MANOR THAT THE KURASHINAS' TIME HAS COME!

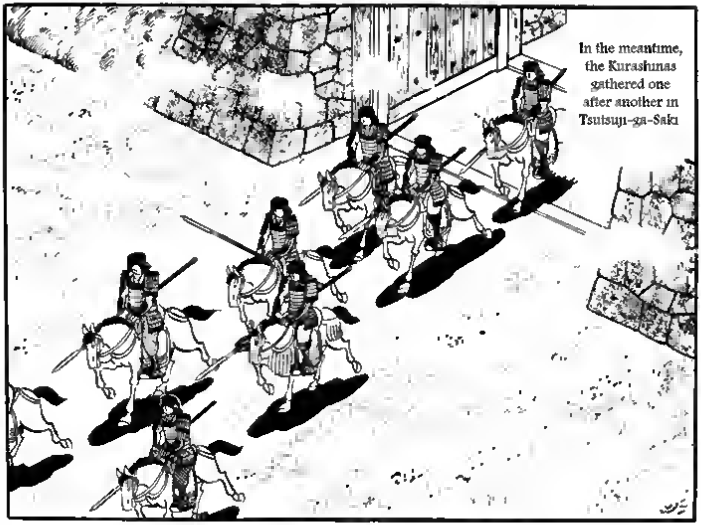


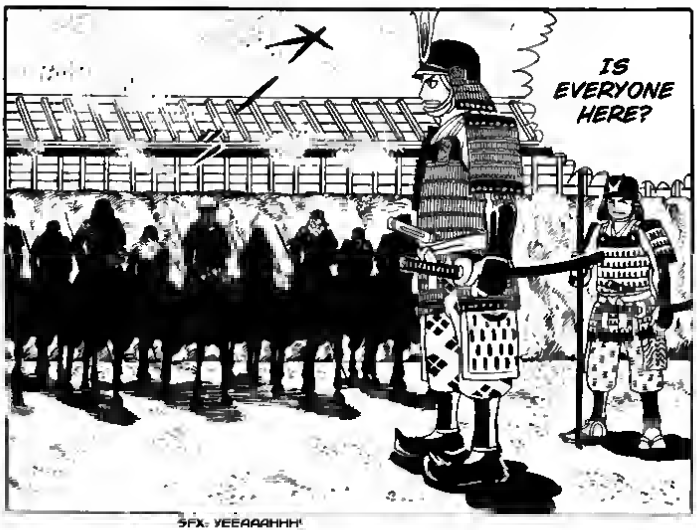
IT'S THE MASTER! THE MASTER HAS RE-TURNED!

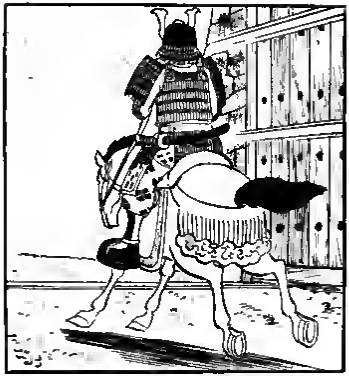
YES, WHAT IS IT?
RE-PORT-ING IN!
THE SUWA AND OGASAWARA COALITION ARMY HAS CROSSED THE BORDER AND INVADED NAGASAKA, AND ARE STARTING FIRES THERE. SIR KAMATA GORO'S COMPANY AND SIR OBU HYOBU'S COMPANY HAVE FACED THE COALITION ARMY, BUT THEY COULD NOT MATCH THEIR FORCE. SIR KAMATA HAS WITHDRAWN TO MINOWA, AND SIR OBU TO THE HIGH GROUND OF YANAGISAWA.

SIR ITAGAKI AND THE MAIN FORCES HAVE SET UP CAMP ALONG THE LINES OF MAKINOHARA, WADA, AND UCHIKOSHI, AND ARE PREPARING TO STOP THE ENEMY IN THEIR TRACKS
WHAT NEWS OF ITAGAKI?
GOOD. THEN TELL ITAGAKI NOBUKATA TO GATHER TWO THOUSAND PEASANTS, HAVE ONE IN EVERY TWELVE BEAR A STRAW BANNER, AND ARM THEM WITH PEBBLES, THEN STATION THEM AT SOBOISHI AND ANAYAMA ALONG THE SHINANO HIGHWAY.
YES, MY LORD.
TELL HIM TO KEEP THE ENEMY AT BAY UNTIL HE HAS GATHERED THOSE PEASANTS. I WILL HAVE ARRIVED BY THE TIME THE PEASANTS ARE GATHERED.

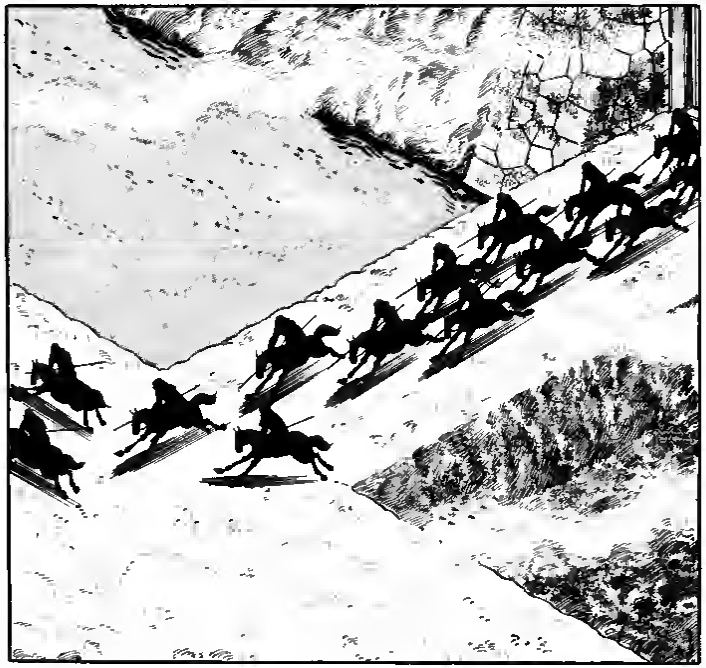
YES, MY LORD.
ALRIGHT. NOW GO EAT BEFORE THE KURASHINAS ARE ASSEMBLED.


In the meantime, the Kurashunas gathered one after another in Tsuisuji-ga-Saki

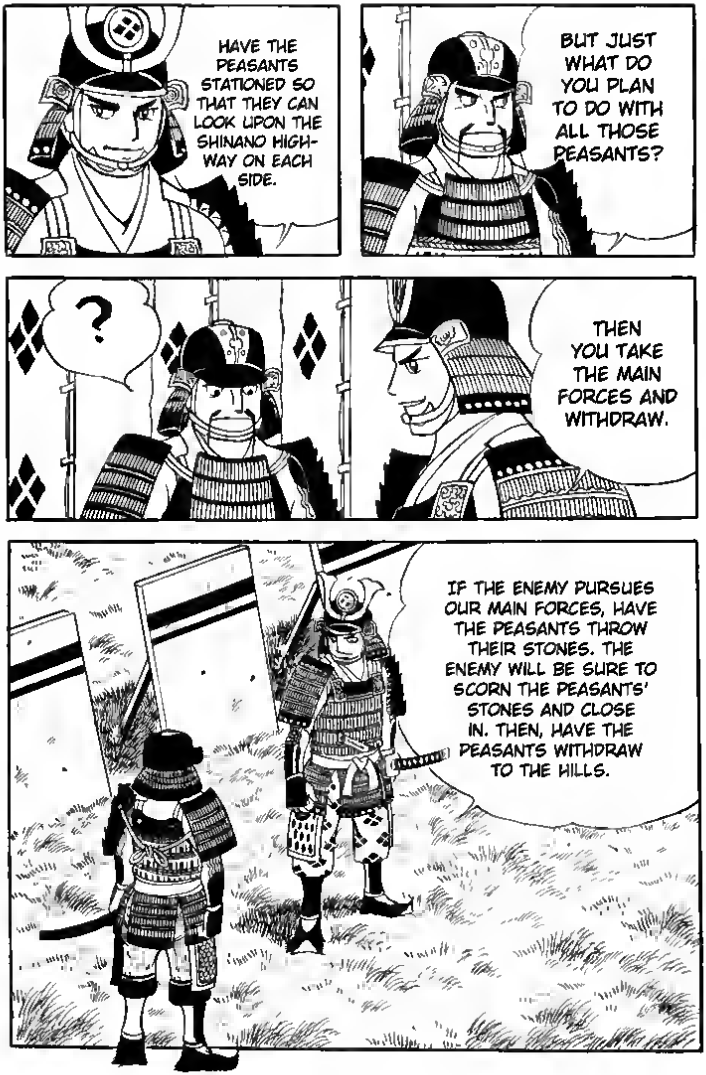

IS EVERYONE HERE?
SFX: YEEAAAHHH!

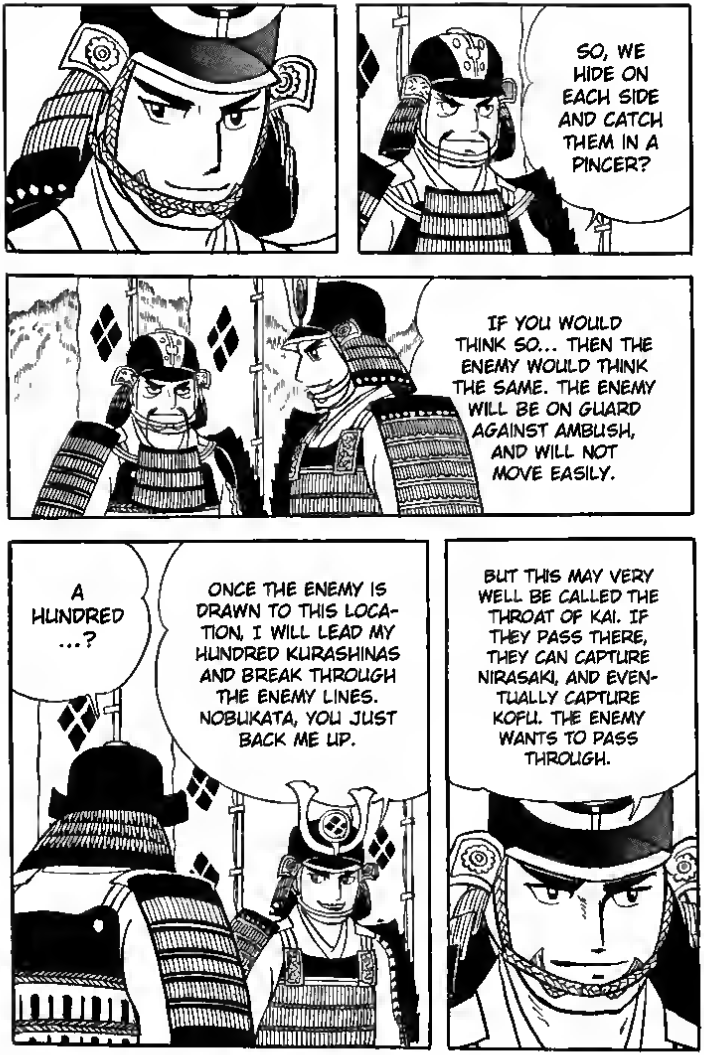


GOOD! NOW, TO ME!

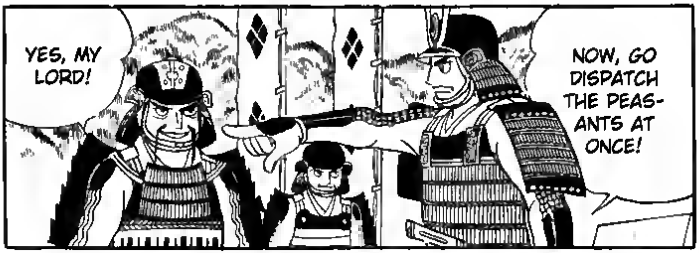


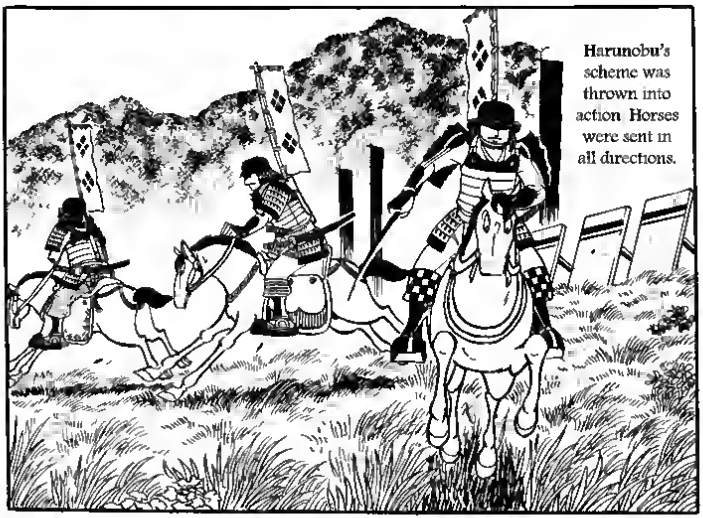
THEY ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF COMING TO ASSAULT NIRASAKI VIA THE SHINANO HIGHWAY.
NOBUKATA, HOW HAS THE ENEMY ACTED?

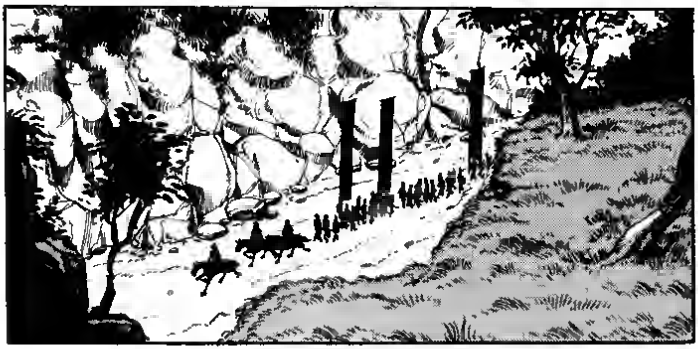

HAVE THE PEASANTS STATIONED SO THAT THEY CAN LOOK UPON THE SHINANO HIGH-WAY ON EACH SIDE.
BUT JUST WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH ALL THOSE PEASANTS?
?
THEN YOU TAKE THE MAIN FORCES AND WITHDRAW.
IF THE ENEMY PURSUES OUR MAIN FORCES, HAVE THE PEASANTS THROW THEIR STONES. THE ENEMY WILL BE SURE TO SCORN THE PEASANTS' STONES AND CLOSE IN. THEN, HAVE THE PEASANTS WITHDRAW TO THE HILLS.

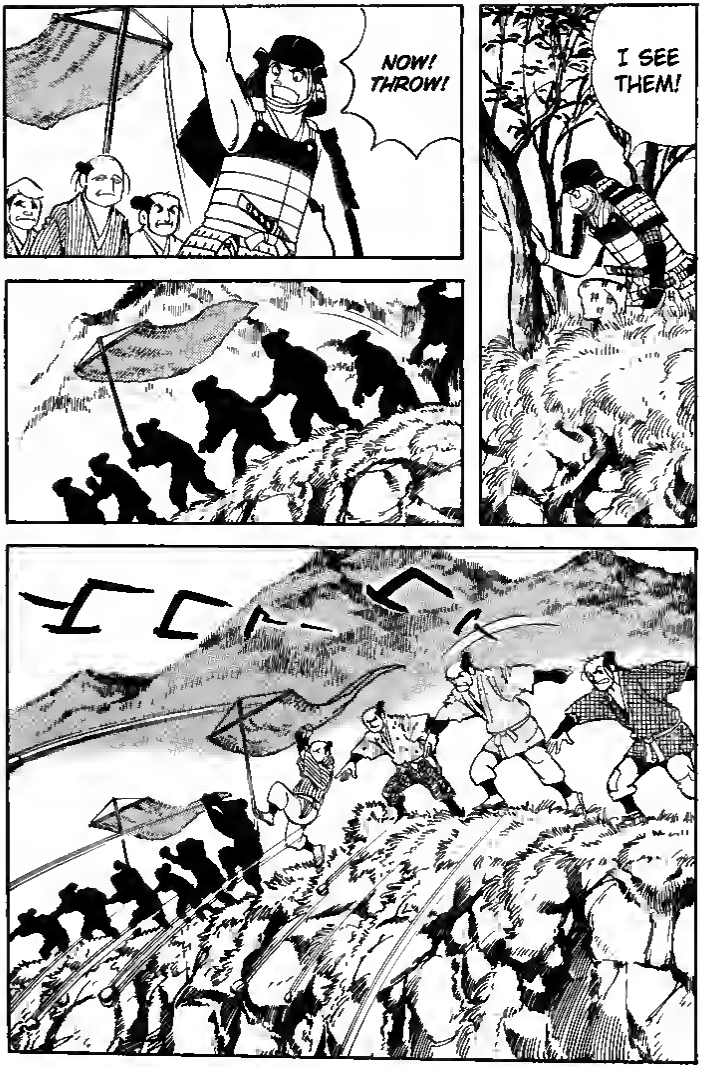

SO, WE HIDE ON EACH SIDE AND CATCH THEM IN A PINCER?
IF YOU WOULD THINK SO... THEN THE ENEMY WOULD THINK THE SAME. THE ENEMY WILL BE ON GUARD AGAINST AMBUSH, AND WILL NOT MOVE EASILY.
A HUNDRED ...?
ONCE THE ENEMY IS DRAWN TO THIS LOCATION, I WILL LEAD MY HUNDRED KURASHINAS AND BREAK THROUGH THE ENEMY LINES. NOBUKATA, YOU JUST BACK ME UP.
BUT THIS MAY VERY WELL BE CALLED THE THROAT OF KAI. IF THEY PASS THERE, THEY CAN CAPTURE NIRASAKI, AND EVENTUALLY CAPTURE KOFU. THE ENEMY WANTS TO PASS THROUGH.

THAT PART OF THE HIGHWAY IS IN A RAVINE, WITH MOUNTAINS ON EACH SIDE. AN ARMY CANNOT PASS THROUGH ALL AT ONCE.

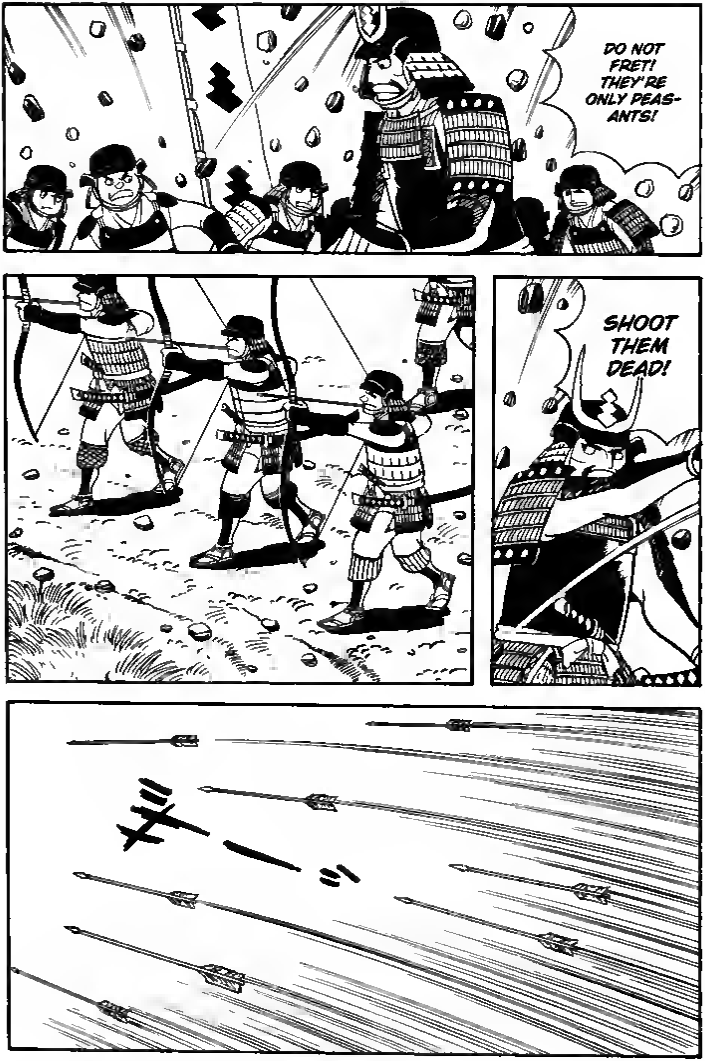

YES, MY LORD!
NOW, GO DISPATCH THE PEASANTS AT ONCE!


Harunobu's scheme was thrown into action. Horses were sent in all directions.

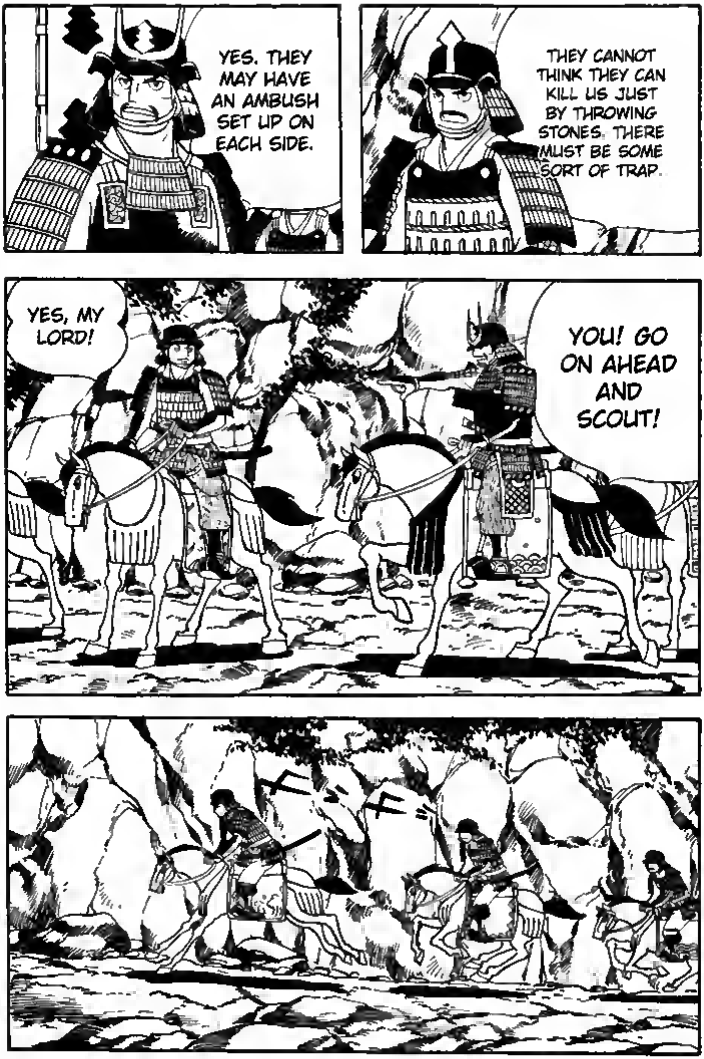



NOW! THROW!
I SEE THEM!

IT'S AN AMBUSH!
AHHH!
HUH?
PEASANTS! THEY'RE JUST PEASANTS THROWING ROCKS!


DO NOT FRET! THEY'RE ONLY PEASANTS!
SHOOT THEM DEAD!

GOOD! NOW RUN INTO THE MOUN-TAINS!
YES.
MY LORD, THIS SEEMS A LITTLE STRANGE.


YES. THEY MAY HAVE AN AMBUSH SET UP ON EACH SIDE.
THEY CANNOT THINK THEY CAN KILL US JUST BY THROWING STONES. THERE MUST BE SOME SORT OF TRAP.
YES, MY LORD!
YOU! GO ON AHEAD AND SCOUT!
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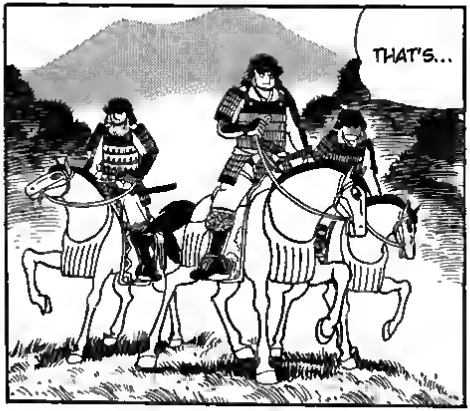
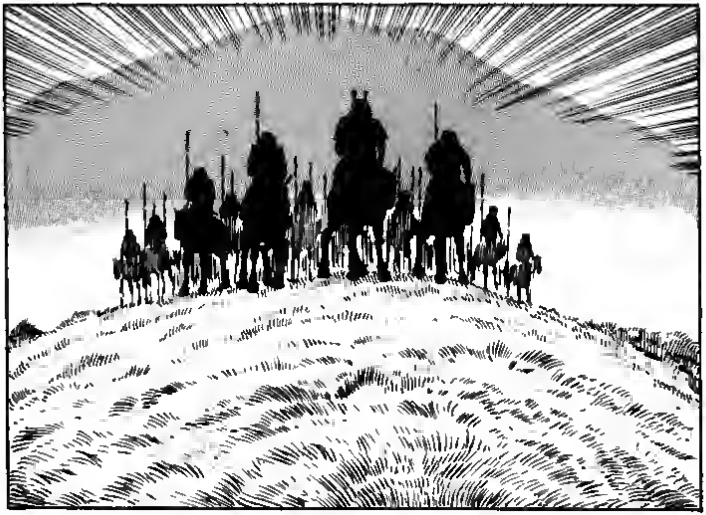
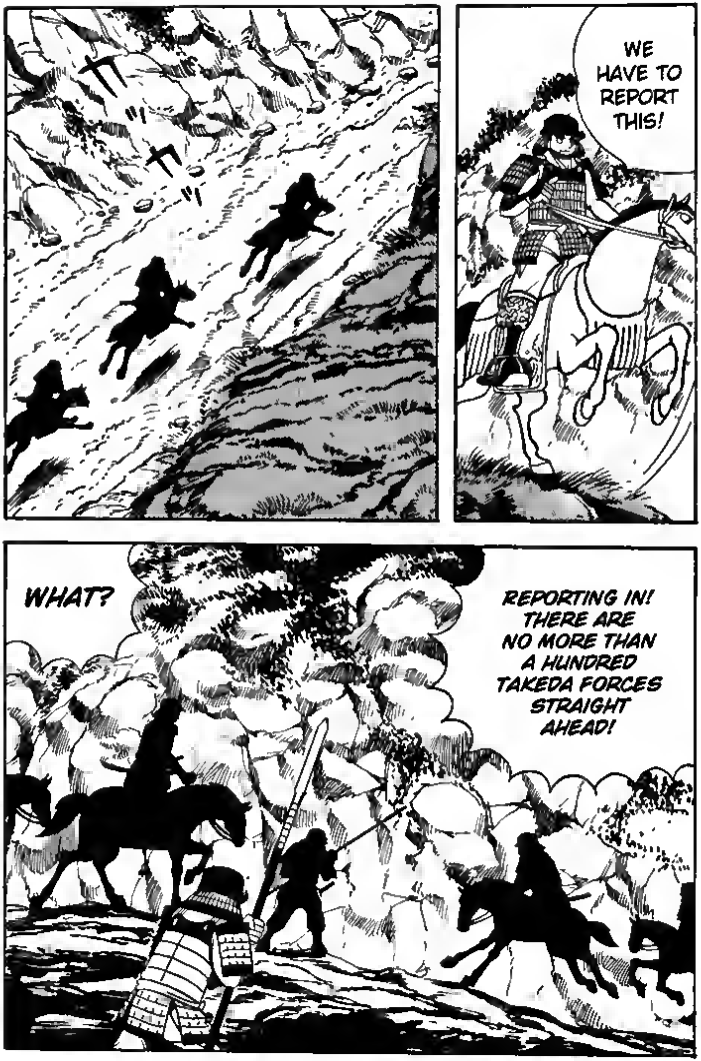

THAT'S...

HUH?



BUT THERE CAN'T BE MORE THAN A HUNDRED OF THEM... THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE MAIN FORCES!
THE TAKEDA ARMY!

THE TAKEDA MUST KNOW THAT NIRASAKI IS IN DANGER IF WE PASS HERE, SO WHERE ARE THE MAIN FORCES?


WE HAVE TO REPORT THIS!
WHAT?
REPORTING IN! THERE ARE NO MORE THAN A HUNDRED TAKEDA FORCES STRAIGHT AHEAD!

NOWHERE IN SIGHT, MY LORD.
WHERE WERE THE MAIN FORCES?
YES.
MY LORD, THIS IS GETTING STRANGER AND STRANGER. THE TAKEDA HAVE TO DEFEND THIS LOCATION TO THE DEATH.
WE MUST PRESS ON, BUT STAY ON HIGH ALERT!

OHHH!
MY LORD! LOOK! THERE THEY ARE!
HALT! DO NOT GO TOO FAR UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON!
THIS IS INDEED STRANGE. THEY MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF PLAN.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATION: SYSTEMATIC CHAOS
PROOFREADING: ANGELOFCHAOTICX
CLEANING: WRIGHT
TYPESETTING: KRA

CHAPTER 12: AS THE WIND

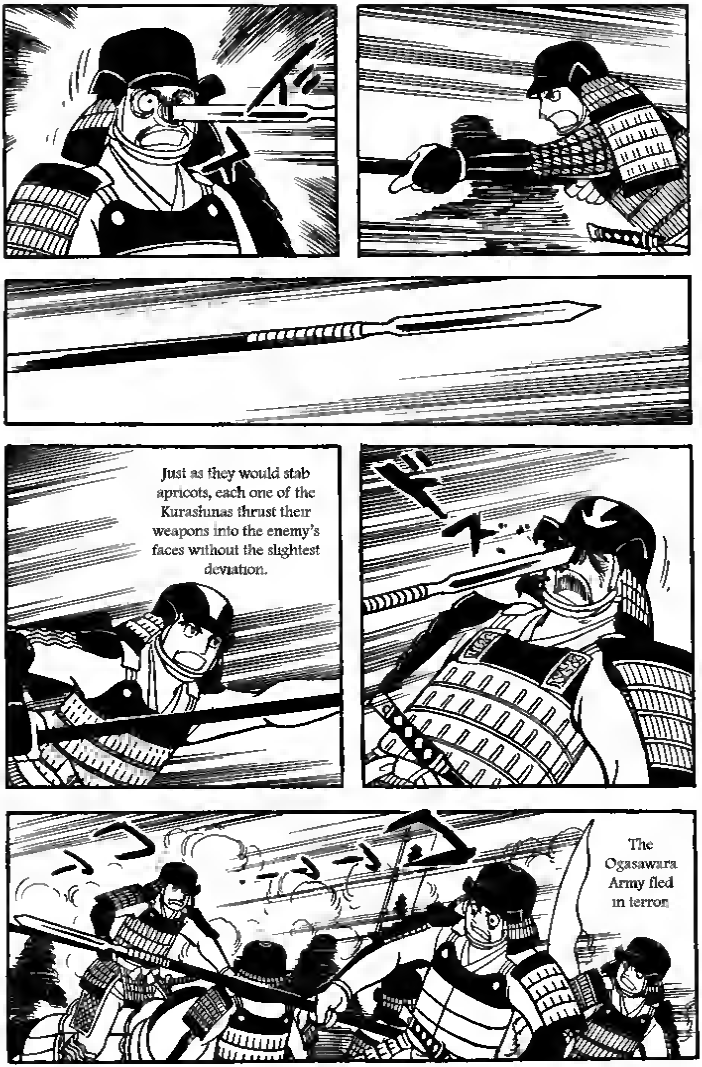
I WISH TO SEE THE KURASHINAS' DANCE OF OME ONCE MORE.
THE ENEMY IS THE SUWA AND OGASAWARA COALITION ARMY. THEY MAY HAVE GREATER NUMBERS, BUT THEY CANNOT BE COORDINATED. YOU MUST CRUSH THE ENEMY'S FACES! THERE IS NO STRATEGY OR SCHEME! JUST STRIKE AT THE ENEMY'S FACES!
ONWARD, AS THE WIND!

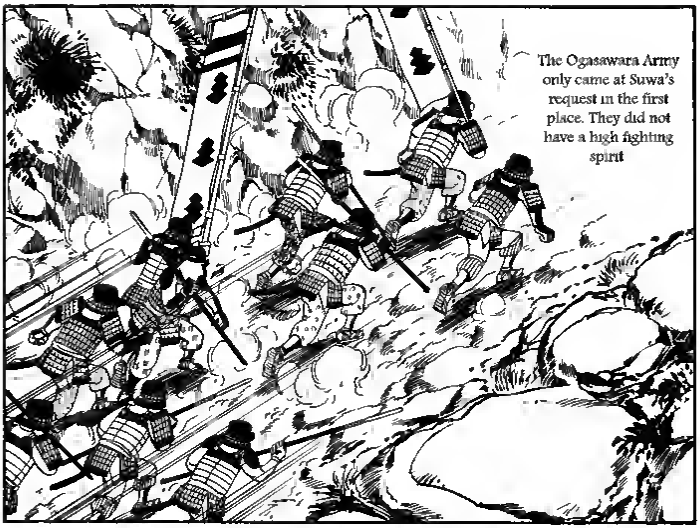
ドドドドド

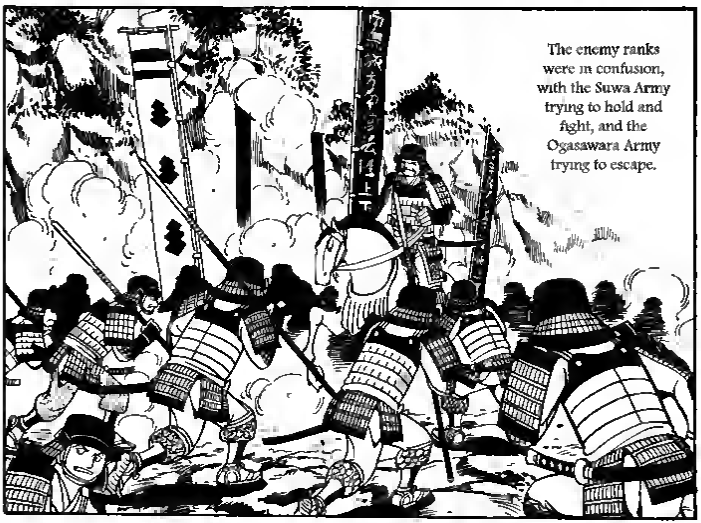
T-THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY!

HUH?

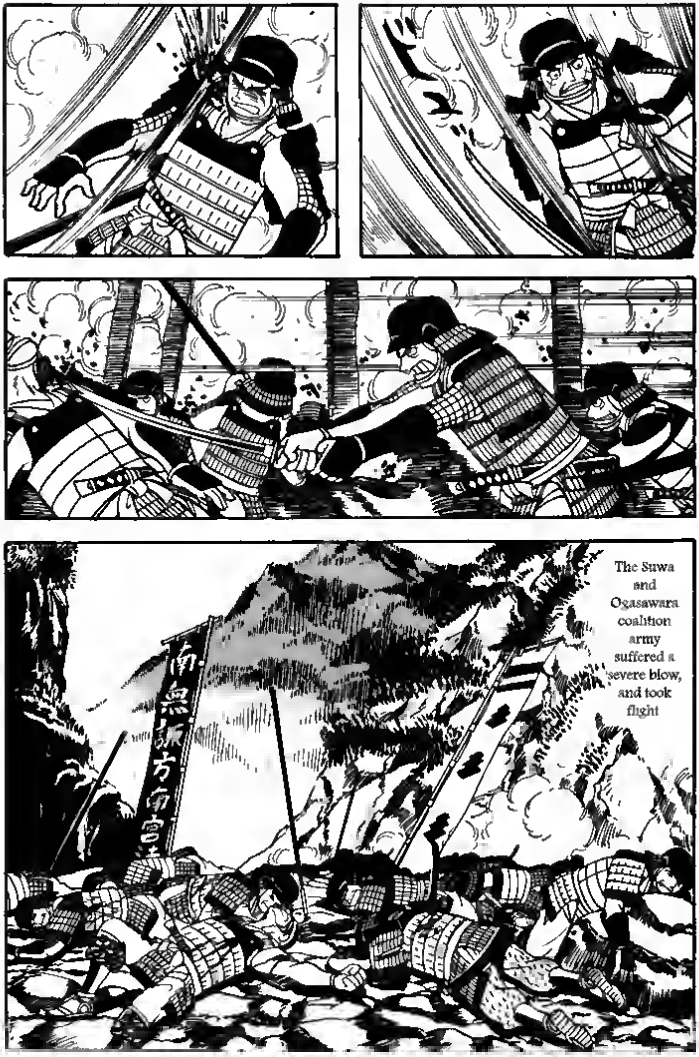
NO, THOSE HAVE TO BE THE BAIT! THEY MUST BE PLANNING SOMETHING ELSE!
THEY COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE THINKING OF ATTACKING US WITH SUCH MEAGER NUMBERS!


Just as they would stab apricots, each one of the Kurashunas thrust their weapons into the enemy's faces without the slightest deviation.
The Ogasawara Army fled in terror

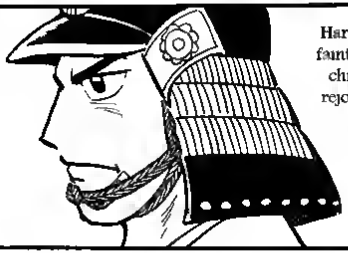

The Ogasawara Army only came at Suwa's request in the first place. They did not have a high fighting spirit


The enemy ranks were in confusion, with the Suwa Army trying to hold and fight, and the Ogasawara Army trying to escape.

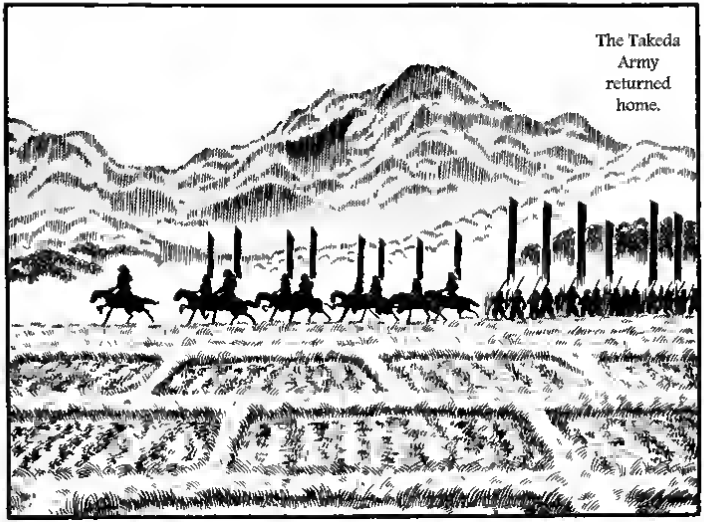
And it was then that Itagaki Nobukata appeared, leading the main Takeda forces,.
and he charged towards the coalition army

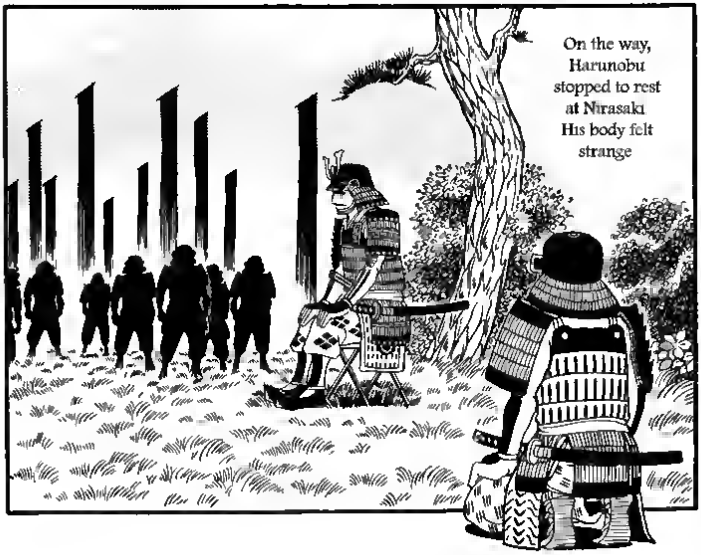

The Suwa and Ogasawara coalition army suffered a severe blow, and took flight

His whole body was flushed, and he felt somehow feverish



Harunobu only faintly heard his chief vassal's rejoicing voice.


The Takeda Army returned home.


On the way, Harunobu stopped to rest at Nirasaki His body felt strange

OH?
MY LORD, THERE ARE SOME MEN WHO WISH TO SEE YOU.
COME HERE.
THEY'RE THE MAGISTRATES I MET IN THE VILLAGE OF KAWAUIRA...

THESE ARE THE FORMER MAGISTRATES, IMAI HYOBU, KAMATA JUROZAEMON, SAEGUSA HANBEI, AND HINATA SABUROSHIRO.
YES.
WE CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR VICTORY.

.....

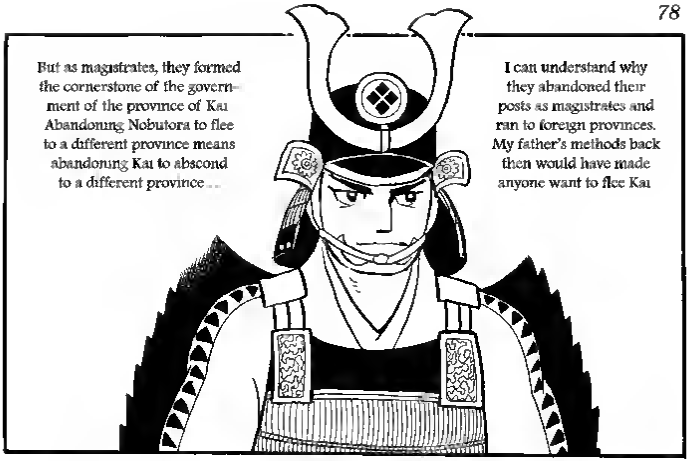
THESE FOUR MEN HAVE ACHIEVED EXCEPTIONAL MERITS IN THE BACK-GROUND UPON YOUR BECOMING LORD OF KAI. THUS, I ASK THAT YOU RESTORE THEM AND GIVE THEM A SUITABLE POST.

IF YOU CANNOT GIVE THEM A SUITABLE POST SO SUDDENLY, I SHALL THINK OF SOMETHING...

WHEN WAS IT THAT YOU FOUR LEFT KAI?

SO IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS...

I BELIEVE IT WAS TENBUN YEAR 5 (1536).


But as magistrates, they formed the cornerstone of the government of the province of Kai. Abandoning Nobutora to flee to a different province means abandoning Kai to abscond to a different province...
I can understand why they abandoned their posts as magistrates and ran to foreign provinces. My father's methods back then would have made anyone want to flee Kai

If they truly loved this province, they should have stayed then, even if they had to endure Nobutora's wrath...

NO, THEY MAY HAVE BEEN AWAY FROM KAI, BUT THEY ALWAYS MAINTAINED CONTACT WITH THE CITIZENS (MIGHTY CLANS) OF KAI.

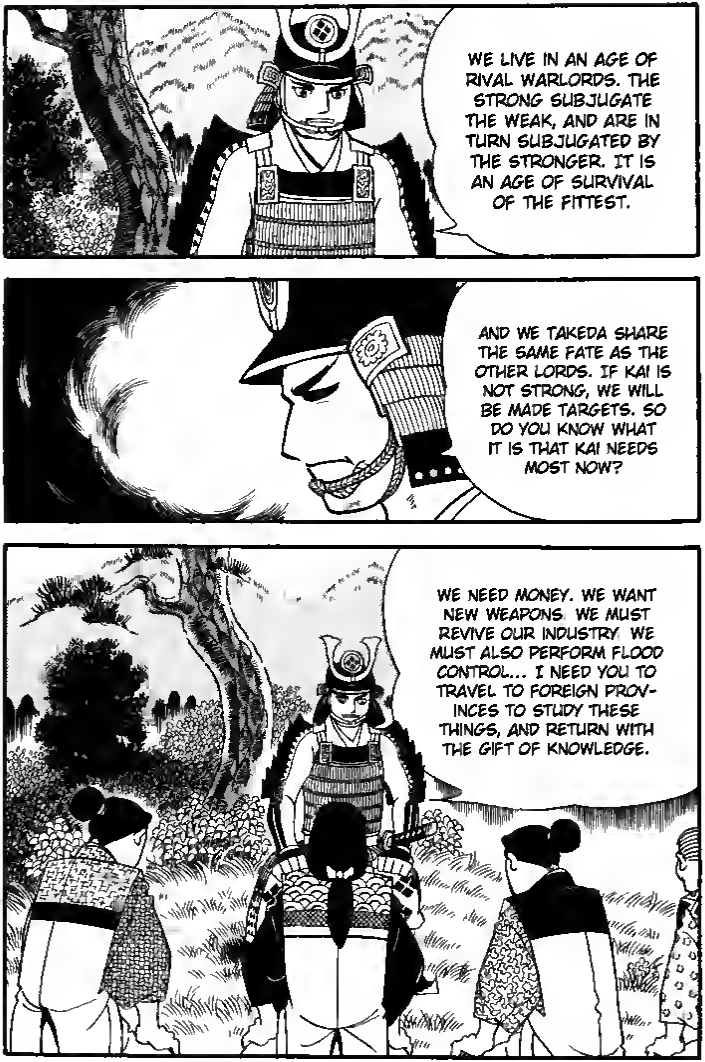
SO YOU HAVE BEEN AWAY FROM KAI FOR FIVE YEARS..

NO, I UNDERSTAND. HOWEVER, HOW DO YOU SUPPOSE OTHERS WOULD SEE IT IF I APPOINTED THESE MAGISTRATES WHO HAD ABANDONED THEIR PROVINCE, FOR WHATEVER REASON, TO A CRUCIAL ROLE RIGHT AFTER MY FATHER'S BANISHMENT?

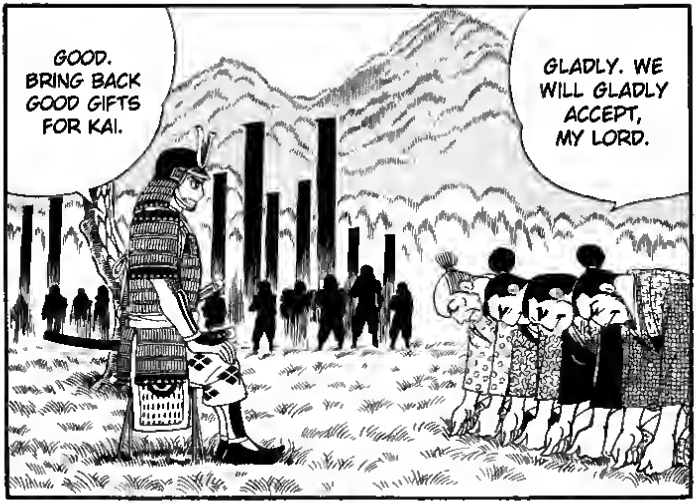
These words were exactly right Neither Itagaki Nobukata nor the four magistrates had anything to say in return

YES, MY LORD?

AND SO, I HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OF YOU.


WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF RIVAL WARLORDS. THE STRONG SUBJUGATE THE WEAK, AND ARE IN TURN SUBJUGATED BY THE STRONGER. IT IS AN AGE OF SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.
AND WE TAKEDA SHARE THE SAME FATE AS THE OTHER LORDS. IF KAI IS NOT STRONG, WE WILL BE MADE TARGETS. SO DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS THAT KAI NEEDS MOST NOW?
WE NEED MONEY. WE WANT NEW WEAPONS. WE MUST REVIVE OUR INDUSTRY. WE MUST ALSO PERFORM FLOOD CONTROL... I NEED YOU TO TRAVEL TO FOREIGN PROVINCES TO STUDY THESE THINGS, AND RETURN WITH THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE.

AS YOU HAVE ALREADY FLED KAI, YOU MAY WANDER THROUGH FOREIGN PROVINCES AND NO ONE WOULD KNOW BETTER THAT YOU ARE WORKING FOR KAI.
THE KNOWLEDGE YOU RETURN WITH MAY MAKE KAI WEAK, BUT IT MAY MAKE KAI STRONG. WILL YOU ACCEPT?
FEEL FREE TO ASK NOBUKATA FOR ANY TRAVELLING EXPENSES. IF YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT ME AS LORD, I WANT YOU TO SUCCEED IN THIS JOB. THIS IS FAR MORE DIFFICULT THAN SERVING IN WAR.


GOOD. BRING BACK GOOD GIFTS FOR KAI.
GLADLY. WE WILL GLADLY ACCEPT, MY LORD.

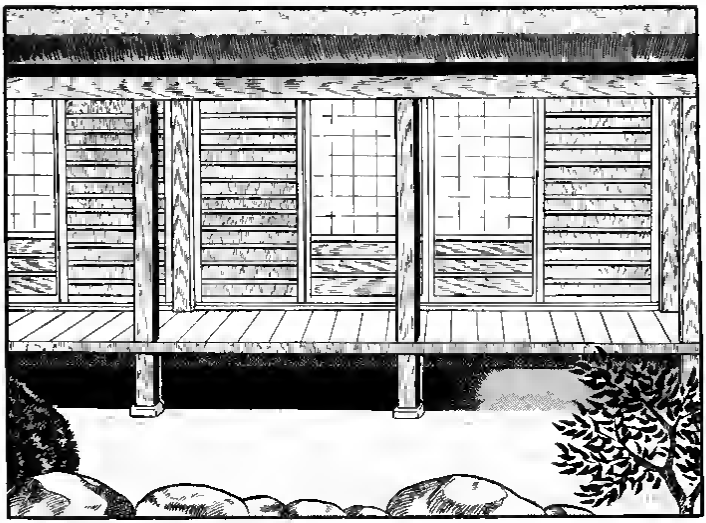
YES, MY LORD.
NOBUKATA, THESE FOUR ARE ABOUT TO EMBARK ON A GRUELLING QUEST. PREPARE THEM WITH EVERYTHING THEY NEED.

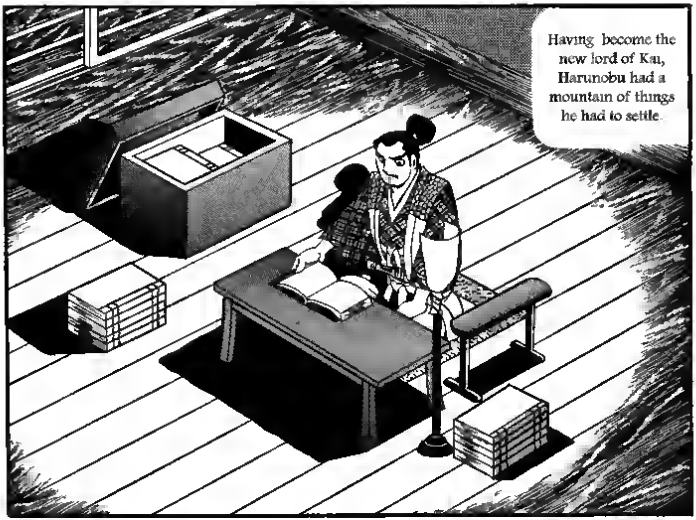
All four magistrates' eyes shone with tears of joy

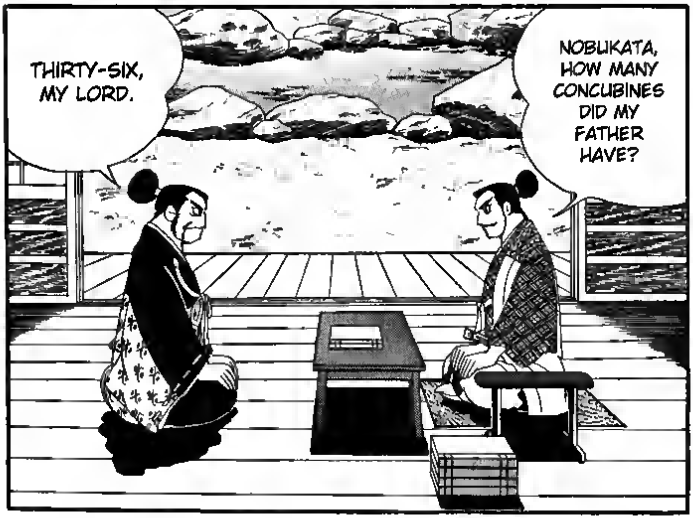
TAKEDA SHINGEN

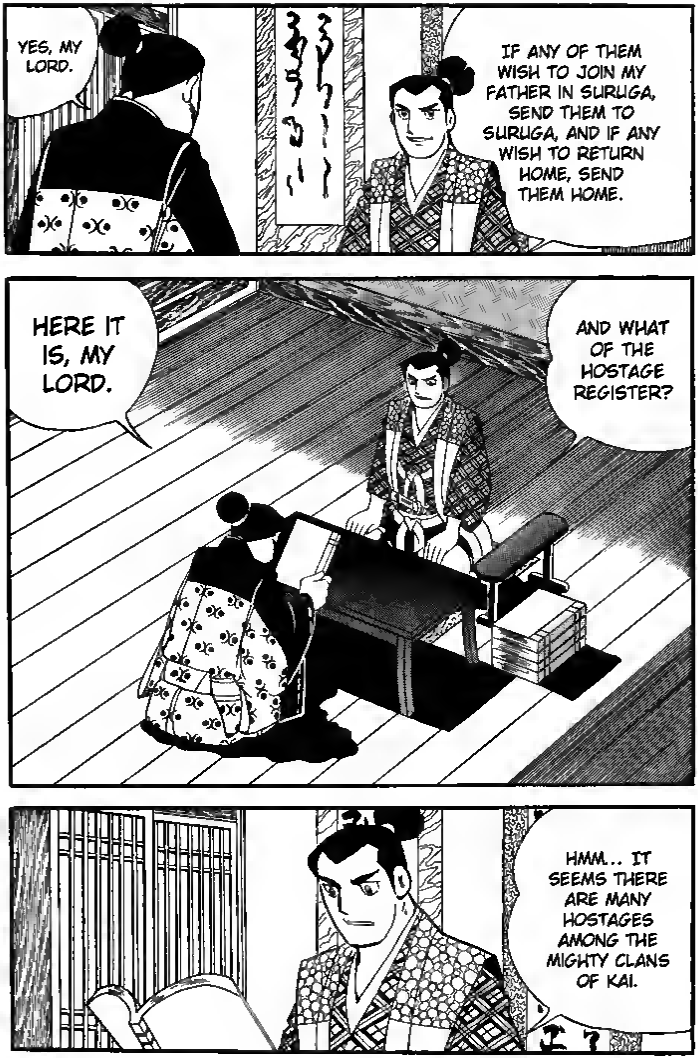
TRANSLATION: SYSTEMATIC CHAOS
PROOFREADING: ANGELOFCHAOTICX
CLEANING: WRIGHT
TYPESETTING: KRA

CHAPTER 13: OUTBREAK




Having become the new lord of Kai, Harunobu had a mountain of things he had to settle.


NOBUKATA, HOW MANY CONCUBINES DID MY FATHER HAVE?
THIRTY-SIX, MY LORD.


IF ANY OF THEM WISH TO JOIN MY FATHER IN SURUGA, SEND THEM TO SURUGA, AND IF ANY WISH TO RETURN HOME, SEND THEM HOME.
YES, MY LORD.
AND WHAT OF THE HOSTAGE REGISTER?
HERE IT IS, MY LORD.
HMM.. IT SEEMS THERE ARE MANY HOSTAGES AMONG THE MIGHTY CLANS OF KAI.

YES, MY LORD.
NO HOSTAGES SHOULD BE TAKEN FROM THE CITIZENS OF KAI. SEND THEM HOME WITH COURTESY.
KOIHIME, DAUGHTER OF LORD SUWA YORISHIGE ...
HUH?
SO HE TOOK HIS DAUGHTER AS A HOSTAGE?
THE TAKEDA CLAN HAS SENT LADY NENE TO BE WED TO LORD SUWA YORISHIGE AS HIS LEGAL WIFE, AND LORD NOBUTORA ASKED FOR KOIHIME IN RETURN.

HE SAID A GUEST, BUT HE MEANT HOSTAGE, DID HE NOT?
NO, AS A GUEST. AS LORD YORISHIGE DOES NOT HAVE ANY SONS, HE ASKED TO TAKE IN KOIHIME, HIS DAUGHTER BY HIS CONCUBINE MISHI, AS A GUEST.
W-WELL...
.....
SUWA YORISHIGE HAS ALREADY INVADED OUR DOMAIN. WOULD HE SLAY HIS OWN DAUGHTER IF HE DID BATTLE HERE?
VERY WELL, I SHALL MEET THIS KOIHIME.

THAT SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM, BUT WHAT REASON WOULD YOU HAVE TO MEET HER?
ARE YOU SAYING I MAY NOT MEET HER?
OF COURSE NOT, BUT KOIHIME IS THE DAUGHTER OF A NOBLE CLAN, SO SHE HAS GREAT PRIDE...
THIS IS AWFUL. LORD HARUNOBU SAID HE WANTED NEZU MOTONAO'S DAUGHTER THE MOMENT HE LAID EYES ON HER. NOT TO MENTION HE JUST LOST HIS BELOVED CONCUBINE KOKO
W-WELL, OF COURSE ..
I AM RATHER USED TO PROUD WOMEN FROM NOBLE CLANS.
NOBUKATA, I AM NOT GOING TO THE NORTH QUARTER SIMPLY TO SEE LORD SUWA'S DAUGHTER KOIHIME. I WANT TO FAMILIARIZE MYSELF WITH THE FACES OF THE HOSTAGES OF THE NORTH QUARTER, AND I WISH TO WITNESS THEIR TREATMENT.

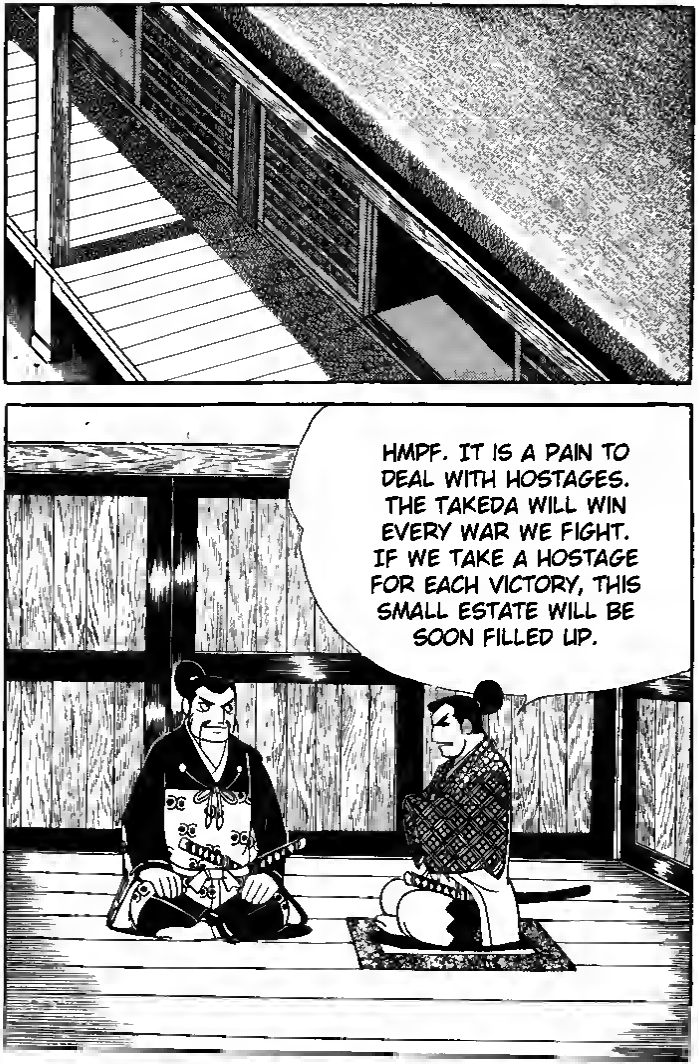
GOOD.
THEN I SHALL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

The North Quarter of the Tsutsuji-ga-Saki Estate was used as a temporary residence for hostages, and the high-class hostages lived there with their servants.

THE NEW LORD OF THIS DOMAIN, HARUNOBU, HAS COME HERE TO VISIT KOIHIME. BE SURE HE IS RECEIVED WELL.

WE WILL PREPARE HER FOR HIS RECEPTION. PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT.

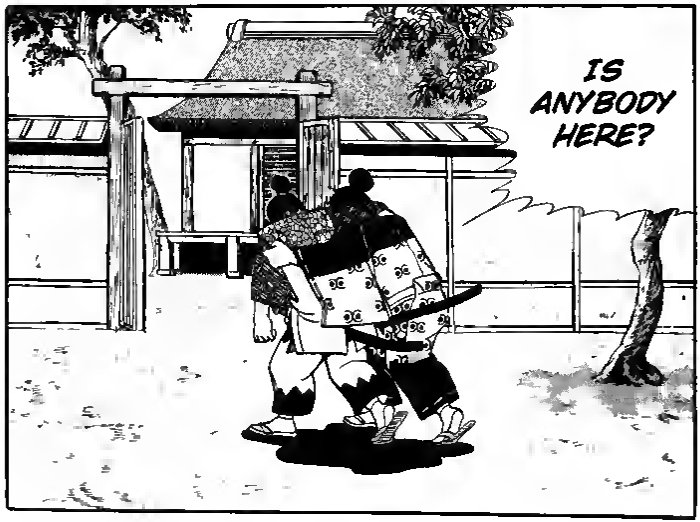
NO, MY LORD. YOU MAY BE FINE WITH HER AS SHE IS, BUT SHE STILL HAS HER PRUDENCE AS A PRINCESS TO CONSIDER, ESPECIALLY AS THE PRINCESS OF THE SUWA CLAN. IF YOU HAVE AUDIENCE WITH HER THAT DOES NOT ADHERE TO ETIQUETTE, WE WOULD BE AT FAULT.
NO NEED. LET HER STAY AS SHE IS.
UNDERSTOOD. WE WILL WAIT IN THE NEXT ROOM
YOU MAY SAY HOSTAGES, BUT IN KOIHIME'S CASE, SHE IS A GUEST ASKED TO STAY HERE IN LADY NENE'S PLACE...
HMM... SO THERE ARE RANKS EVEN AMONG HOSTAGES.
WHAT SHALL WE DO?


HMPF. IT IS A PAIN TO DEAL WITH HOSTAGES. THE TAKEDA WILL WIN EVERY WAR WE FIGHT. IF WE TAKE A HOSTAGE FOR EACH VICTORY, THIS SMALL ESTATE WILL BE SOON FILLED UP.

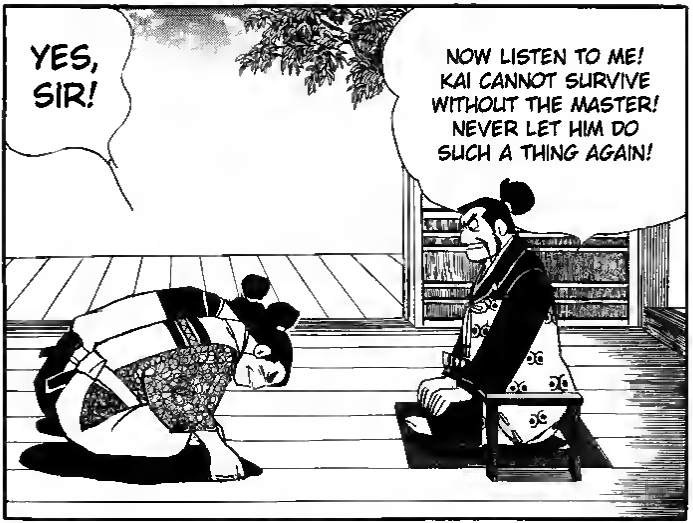
THERE ARE TWENTY OR THIRTY GENERALS WHO DO NOT SERVE ME IN SHINANO ALONE. THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER WE EXPAND OUR TERRITORY INTO SURUGA AND ECHIGO? WE WOULD HAVE TO BUILD AN ESTATE THE SIZE OF TSUTSUJI-GA-SAKI EVERY YEAR TO KEEP UP!
WE CANNOT UNITE THE NATION WITHOUT THEM.
MUST WE EXPAND INTO SURUGA AND ECHIGO AFTER SHINANO?
I WILL PUT THIS CHAOTIC AGE TO REST.
INDEED, IT WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO MARCH ON KYOTO WITH THE DOMAINS OF KAI, SHINANO, AND ECHIGO.
OUR JUDGMENTS DID NOT PROVE WRONG. I AM SURE LORD HARUNOBU CAN DO IT.

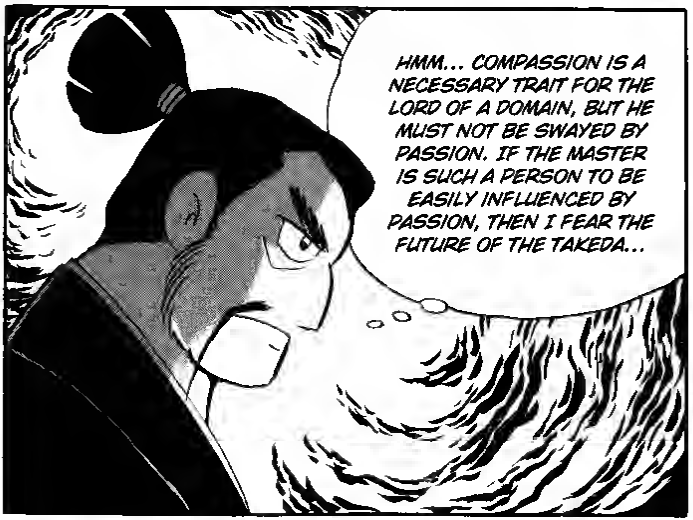
MASTER?
MASTER, YOU MUST NOT FALL ASLEEP HERE.
URK! HE'S BURNING UP!

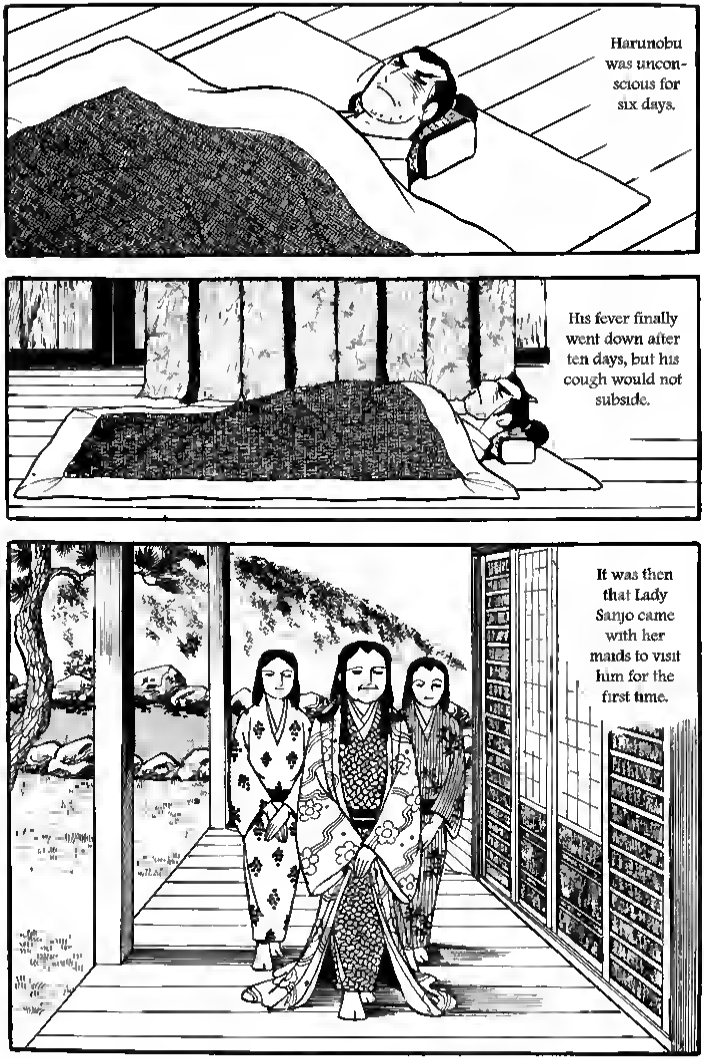
HOLD ON TO MY SHOULDER, MASTER! WE MUST TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR BEDROOM AND TREAT YOU IMMEDIATELY!


IS ANYBODY HERE?

YES, SIR.
WHAT? HE SPENT THE NIGHT BEFORE KOKO'S GRAVE IN THE RAIN?
HE WAS SO DISTRESSED, WE COULD NOT BRING OURSELVES TO SPEAK TO HIM
YOU IDIOTS! WHY WOULD YOU LET HIM DO THAT?


YES, SIR!
NOW LISTEN TO ME! KAI CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT THE MASTER! NEVER LET HIM DO SUCH A THING AGAIN!

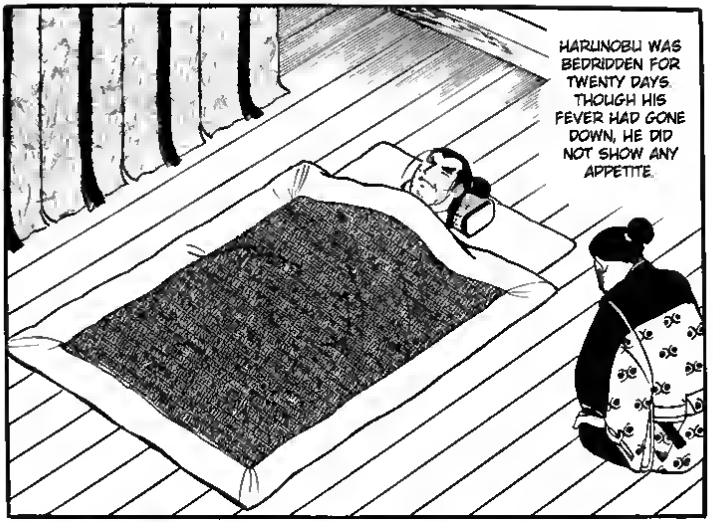

HMM... COMPASSION IS A NECESSARY TRAIT FOR THE LORD OF A DOMAIN, BUT HE MUST NOT BE SWAYED BY PASSION. IF THE MASTER IS SUCH A PERSON TO BE EASILY INFLUENCED BY PASSION, THEN I FEAR THE FUTURE OF THE TAKEDA...


Harunobu was unconscious for six days.
His fever finally went down after ten days, but his cough would not subside.
It was then that Lady Sanjo came with her maids to visit him for the first time.

YES.
I AM DELIGHTED TO HEAR YOU ARE IN CONVALES-CENCE.
YES. THAT WAY MAY MAKE THEM GROW STRONGER.
CHILDREN WILL GROW EVEN WHEN NEGLECTED.
ARE THE CHILDREN WELL?

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE CAUGHT KOKO'S TUBER-CULOSIS?
NOW, TAKE CARE.
YES, MY LADY.
TUBERCULOSIS WOULD BE AWFUL. WE MUST CALL A GOOD DOCTOR FROM KYOTO. I CANNOT TRUST THE DOCTORS OF THIS GRASSY PLACE.

YES, MY LORD.
THAT CARPET IS AN EYE-SORE. TAKE IT AWAY.

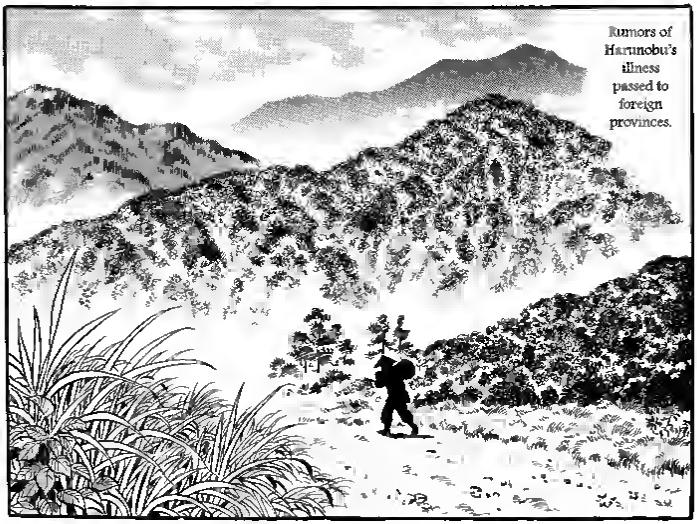

HARUNOBU WAS BEDRIDDEN FOR TWENTY DAYS. THOUGH HIS FEVER HAD GONE DOWN, HE DID NOT SHOW ANY APPETITE.

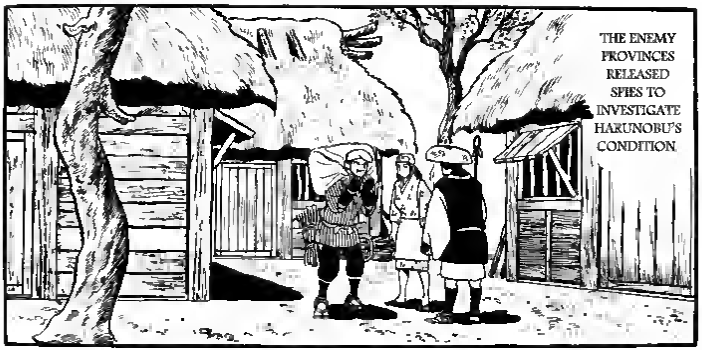
HIS CHEEKS HOLLOWED, AND HIS STRENGTH WEAKENED DAY BY DAY. THE DOCTORS TRIED DESPERATELY TO MAKE HIM EAT SOMETHING.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

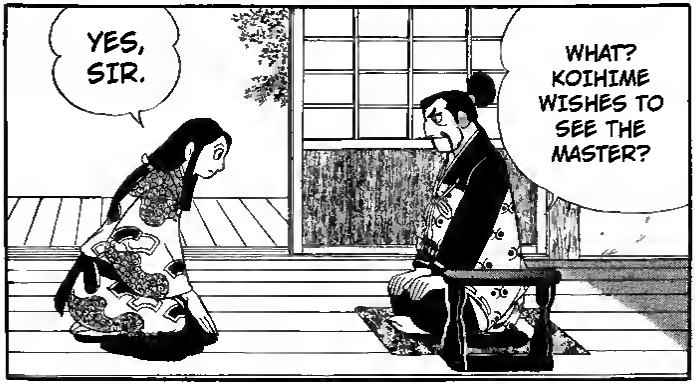
TRANSLATION: SYSTEMATIC CHAOS
PROOFREADING: ANGELOFCHAOTICX
CLEANING: WRIGHT
TYPESETTING: KRA

CHAPTER 14: KOIHIME




THE ENEMY PROVINCES RELEASED SPIES TO INVESTIGATE HARUNOBU'S CONDITION

THERE WERE NOT JUST A COUPLE OF SPIES WHO WERE TRYING TO SLITHER INTO TSUTSUJI GA-SAKI

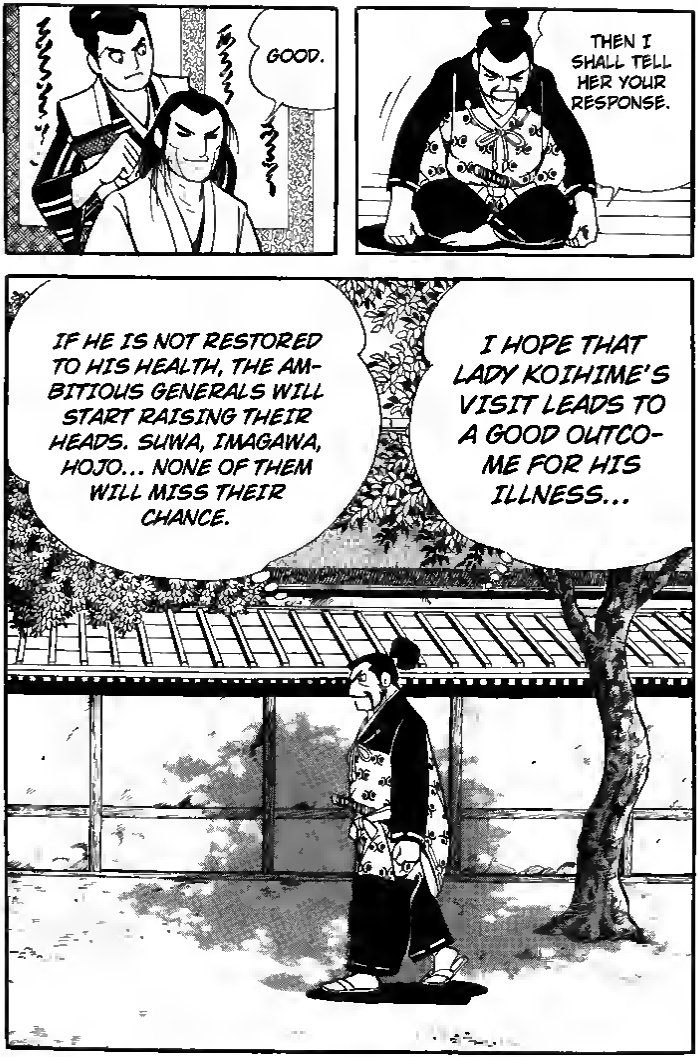

YES, SIR.
WHAT? KOIHIME WISHES TO SEE THE MASTER?

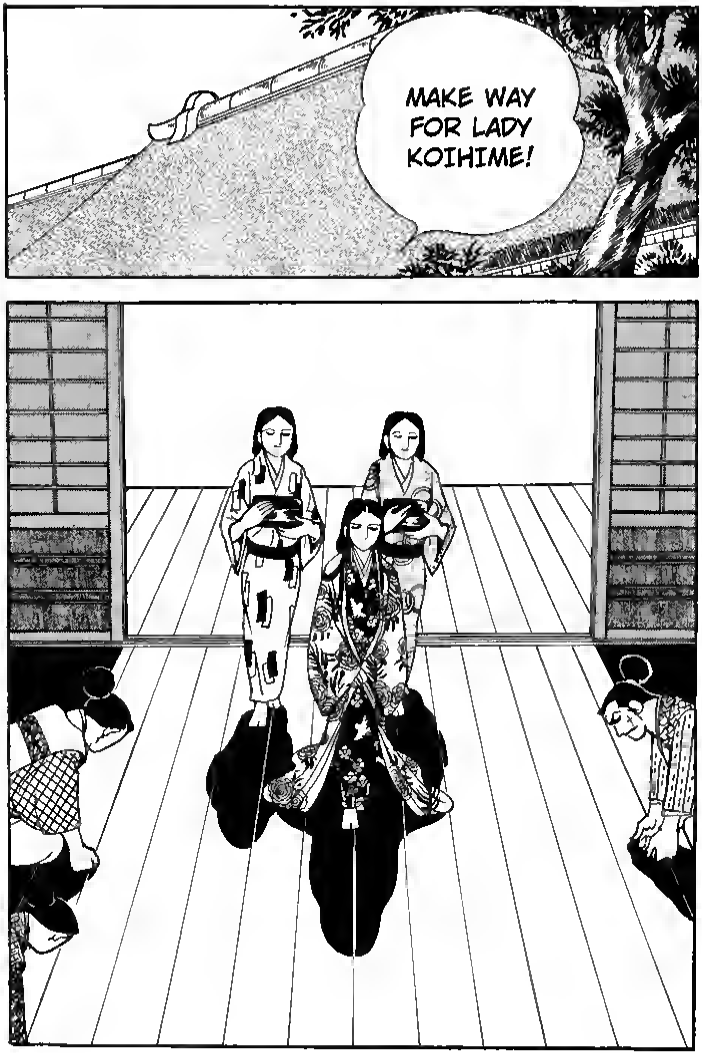
I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A HOSTAGE MAKING A VISIT BEFORE. WHAT COULD SHE BE UP TO?

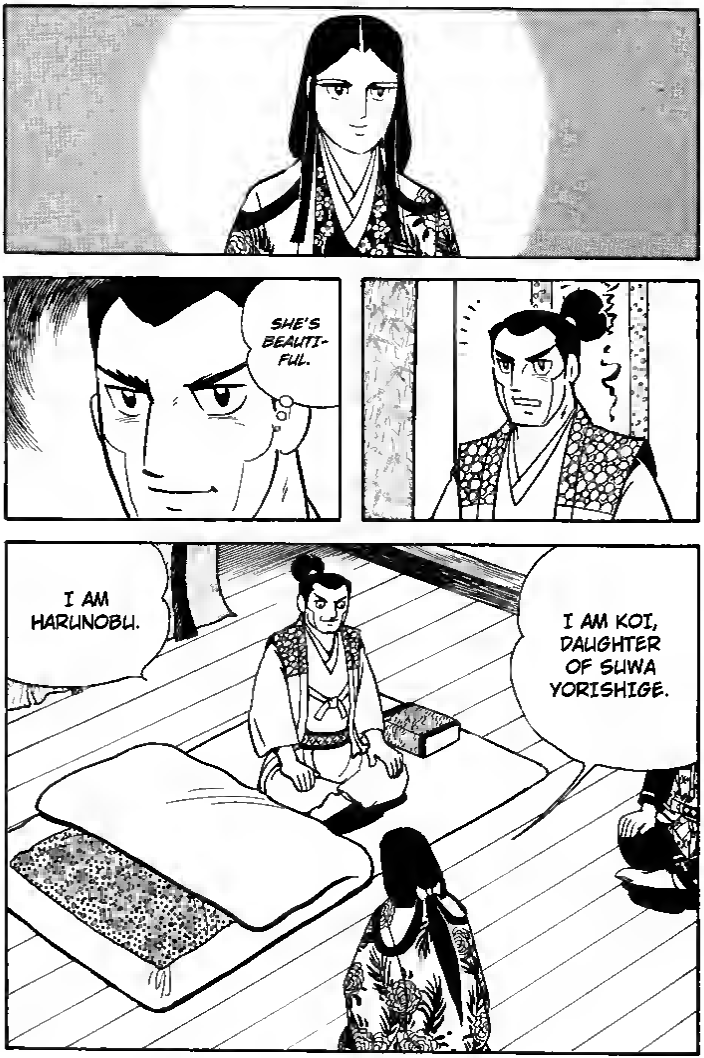
HMM... THAT JUST MIGHT BE A GOOD WAY TO BRING UP THE MASTER'S MOOD.
AND THE PRINCESS IS ALSO VERY WORRIED THAT THE MASTER HAS NO APPETITE, SO SHE SAYS SHE WANTS TO BRING FOOD SHE MADE HERSELF.
THE MASTER COLLAPSED WITH ILLNESS WHILE LADY KOIHIME WAS PREPARING HERSELF, AND THE PRINCESS IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT HIM.
YES, SIR. I WILL TELL HER SO.
WHATEVER CASE, THIS IS UNPRECEDENTED I CANNOT REPLY WITHOUT FIRST ASKING THE MASTER.

ALIVE, AND YET NOT WELL.
HOW DO YOU FEEL, MASTER?
YOU SEE, LADY KOIHI-ME WISHES TO COME VISIT YOU.
WHAT? KOIHIME?

WE DID JUST CROSS OUR SPEARS WITH THE SUWA CLAN, BUT WE MUST NOT YET SEVER OUR TIES. KOIHIME IS A GUEST OF OUR CLAN. WE MUST TREAT HER WITH COURTESY.
WILL YOU ACCEPT LADY KOIHIME'S VISIT? IF YOU ACCEPT, WE MUST PREPARE YOU. AFTER ALL, THE SUWA CLAN ALWAYS SPEAKS OF THEIR HERITAGE. IT MAY BECOME A STRICT AND FORMAL VISIT.
YOU HAVE CERTAINLY RECOVERED QUICKLY NOW THAT KOIHIME IS COMING TO VISIT.
I AM TOO FILTHY IN THIS STATE. YOU, FIX MY HAIR.

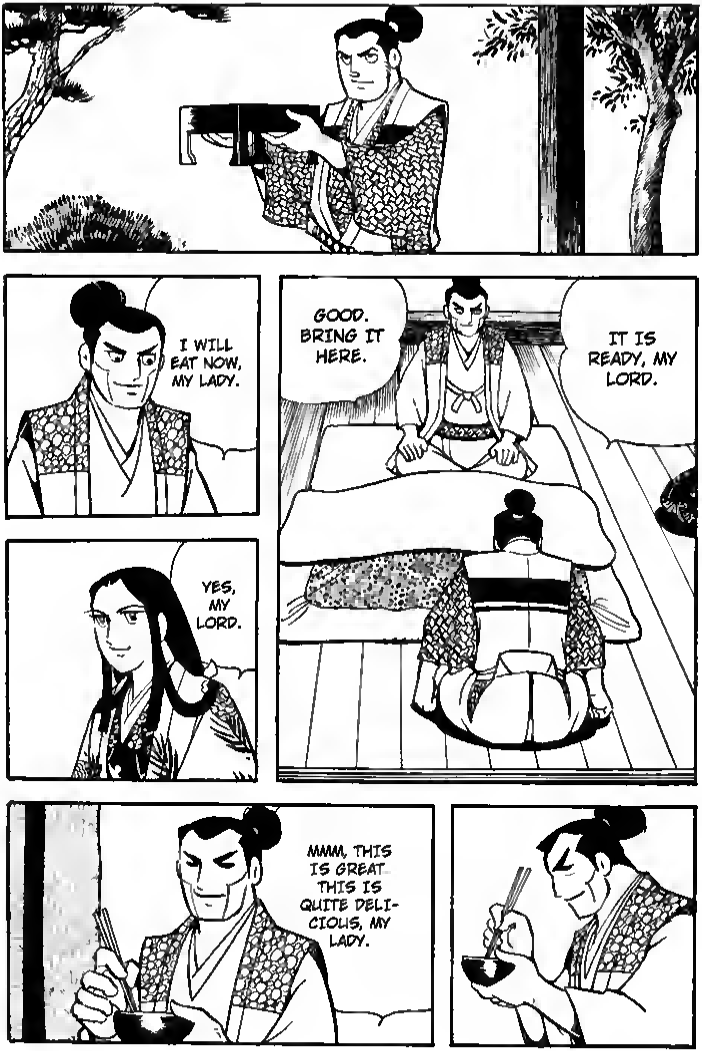

GOOD.
THEN I SHALL TELL HER YOUR RESPONSE.
IF HE IS NOT RESTORED TO HIS HEALTH, THE AMBITIOUS GENERALS WILL START RAISING THEIR HEADS. SUWA, IMAGAWA, HOJO... NONE OF THEM WILL MISS THEIR CHANCE.
I HOPE THAT LADY KOIHIME'S VISIT LEADS TO A GOOD OUTCOME FOR HIS ILLNESS...


MAKE WAY FOR LADY KOIHIME!


SHE'S BEAUTIFUL.
I AM HARUNOBU.
I AM KOI, DAUGHTER OF SUWA YORISHIGE.

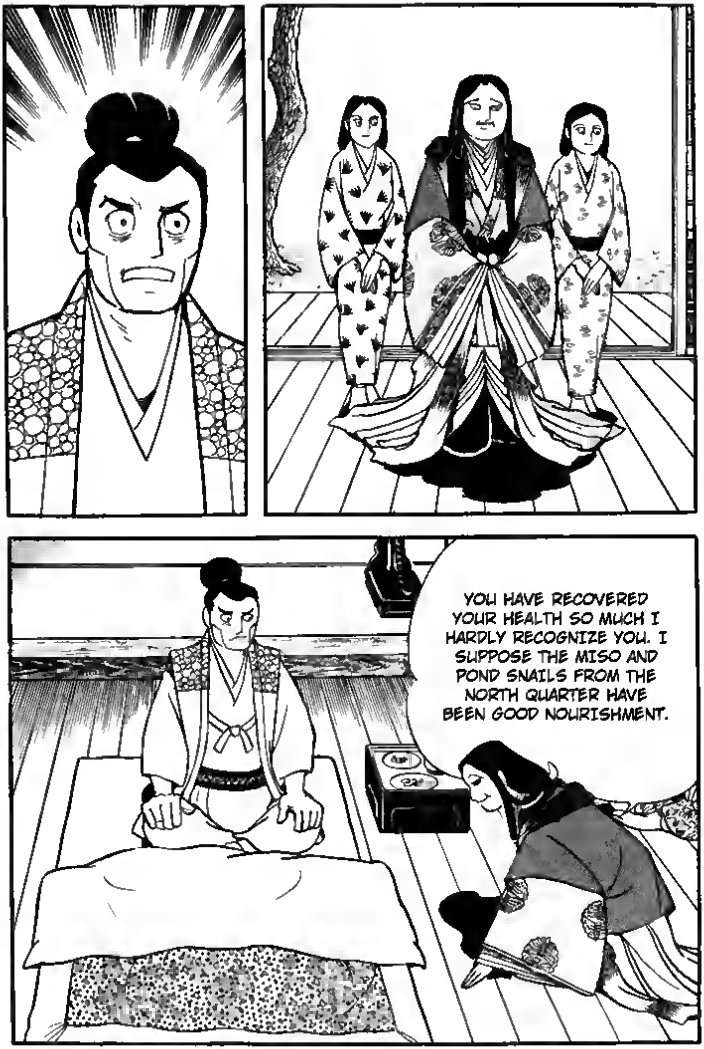
YOU ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF EXHAUSTION WITH YOUR MANY WORRIES DO NOT LET IT TROUBLE YOU
I WAS VERY WORRIED FOR YOU WHEN YOU FELL IN WHILE I WAS PREPARING
OH? I HAVE HEARD THAT THE MISO OF SUWA IS GOOD. DO YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE IT?
I HEARD YOU HAVE NOT BEEN EATING WELL, SO I HAVE BROUGHT SOME CARP, POND SNAILS, AND MISO FROM SUWA. I AM SURE THEY WILL SUIT YOUR TASTE. I HOPE YOU WILL EAT AND RECOVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
I DO NOT KNOW WELL, BUT MY MOTHER TOLD ME IT WAS MADE WITH DAIZU BEANS, BARLEY, AND MOLD, WITH SALT ADDED TO IT.

HA HA HA!
BUT I HAVE NEVER SEEN IT MADE.
I LOVE IT. MISO SOUP AND THE SNAILS OF LAKE SUWA TASTE EXCEPTIONAL.
DO YOU LIKE MISO SOUP?
YES, MY LORD.
GOOD. THEN I WILL HAVE THEM PREPARE THEM AT ONCE.


I WILL EAT NOW, MY LADY.
GOOD. BRING IT HERE.
IT IS READY, MY LORD.
YES, MY LORD.
MMM, THIS IS GREAT. THIS IS QUITE DELICIOUS, MY LADY.

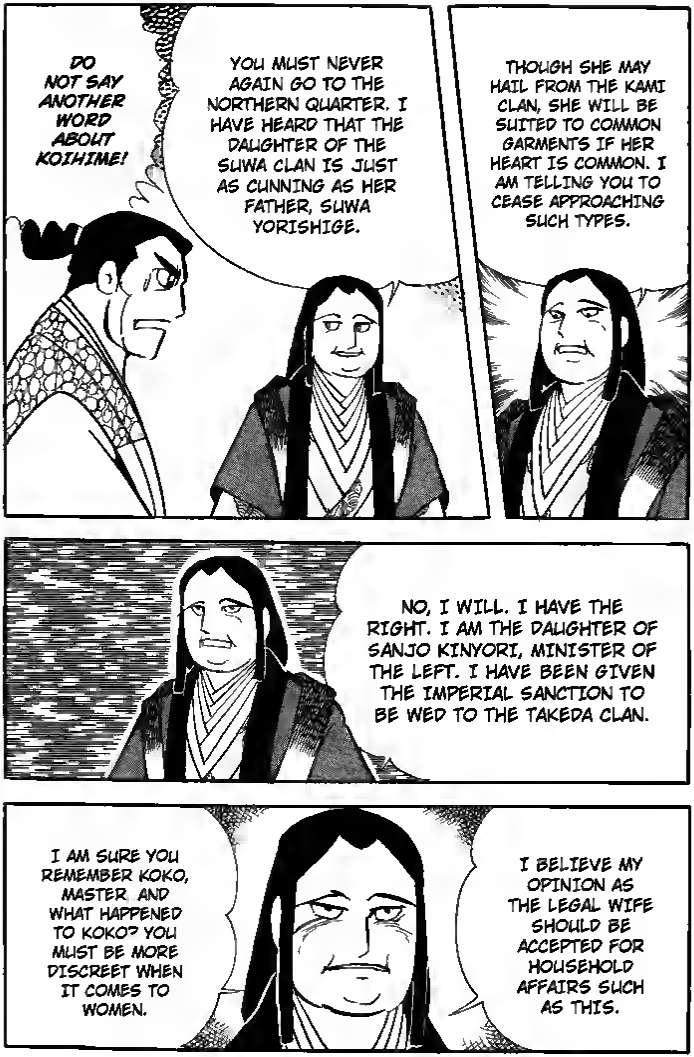
NOW I MUST LEAVE BEFORE MY HEALTH IS AFFECTED.
I AM VERY PLEASED TO SEE YOU. RECEIVE IT WITH GRATITUDE.
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL...

ONCE HARUNOBU RECOVERED HIS APPETITE, HE BEGAN REGAINING HIS STRENGTH.
WELL, TACHIKI SENGEN? I AM ALREADY OUT OF BED.
IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU OUT OF BED, BUT YOU MUST NOT RIDE A HORSE YET. STROLL, AT MOST.
UNDERSTOOD. I WILL DO SO.
LADY SANJO HAS COME.

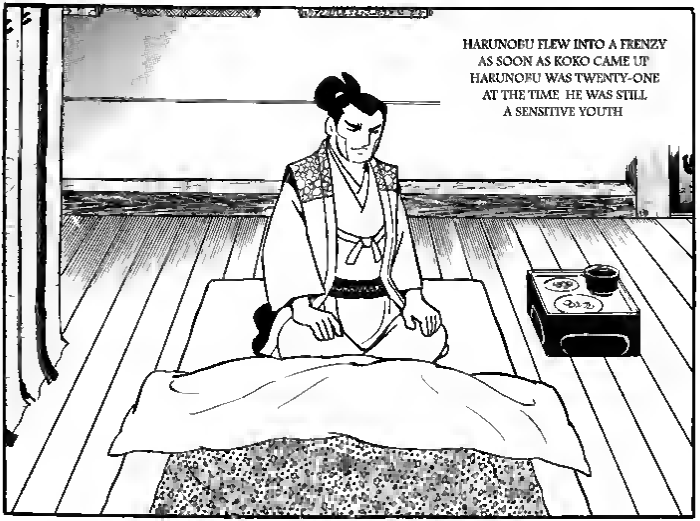

YOU HAVE RECOVERED YOUR HEALTH SO MUCH I HARDLY RECOGNIZE YOU. I SUPPOSE THE MISO AND POND SNAILS FROM THE NORTH QUARTER HAVE BEEN GOOD NOURISHMENT.

THAT IS VERY GOOD. PLEASE, DO SO.
I AM ALREADY READY TO LEAVE MY BED.
BUT DO NOT LET YOUR LEGS TAKE YOU TO THE NORTH QUARTER. THE NORTH QUARTER IS A RESIDENCE FOR HOSTAGES. IT WOULD BE A PROBLEM IF RUMORS SPREAD THAT THE LORD OF KAI WAS VISITING HOSTAGES.
I NEVER SAID YOU WERE. I AM JUST INFORMING YOU TO MAKE SURE THAT RUMORS DO NOT SPREAD.
WHO SAID I WAS VISITING HOSTAGES!?
WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?
BUT STILL, WHAT'S WITH HER GARMENTS ...?

IS THIS SHORT COAT A STRANGE SIGHT TO YOU? OR IF YOU DO NOT LIKE THIS FORMAL COAT, WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE ME COME IN COQUETTISHLY WITH A SHORT-SLEEVED FLOWER-PATTERNED GARMENT, LIKE A MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER?
THE BIRD-PATTERNED GARMENT KOIHIME WORE WHEN SHE CAME TO VISIT ME WAS BEAUTIFUL. I DID NOT SEE THAT GARMENT AS COQUETTISH. IT WAS QUITE ELEGANT.
IT IS QUITE ELEGANT FOR ONE OF A COMMON BIRTH. BUT SINCE YOU ARE ALWAYS ATTACHED TO COMMON WOMEN, YOU ARE ALWAYS DAZZLED BY WHAT THEY WEAR.
COMMON WOMEN? KOIHIME HAILS FROM THE SUWA CLAN, DESCENDED FROM THE KAMI CLAN! WATCH YOUR WORDS!


DO NOT SAY ANOTHER WORD ABOUT KOIHIME!
YOU MUST NEVER AGAIN GO TO THE NORTHERN QUARTER. I HAVE HEARD THAT THE DAUGHTER OF THE SUWA CLAN IS JUST AS CUNNING AS HER FATHER, SUWA YORISHIGE.
THOUGH SHE MAY HAIL FROM THE KAMI CLAN, SHE WILL BE SUITED TO COMMON GARMENTS IF HER HEART IS COMMON. I AM TELLING YOU TO CEASE APPROACHING SUCH TYPES.
NO, I WILL. I HAVE THE RIGHT. I AM THE DAUGHTER OF SANJO KINYORI, MINISTER OF THE LEFT. I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE IMPERIAL SANCTION TO BE WED TO THE TAKEDA CLAN.
I AM SURE YOU REMEMBER KOKO, MASTER AND WHAT HAPPENED TO KOKO? YOU MUST BE MORE DISCREET WHEN IT COMES TO WOMEN.
I BELIEVE MY OPINION AS THE LEGAL WIFE SHOULD BE ACCEPTED FOR HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS SUCH AS THIS.

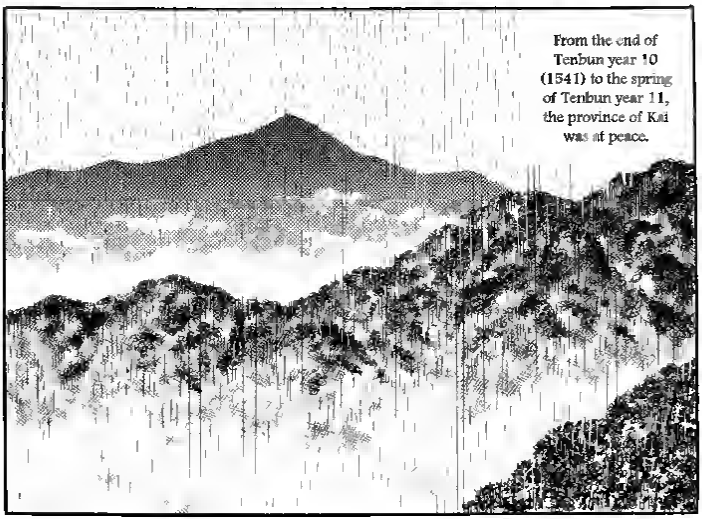
AND WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED BY KILLING KOKO?
YOU SHOULD BE OLD ENOUGH TO THINK BEFORE YOU TALK. IF YOU BECOME A DEMON OF JEALOUSY AND LAY A HAND ON KOIHIME OF THE NORTHERN QUARTER, I WILL SLAY YOU!
IF THEY HAD PROPERLY RULED THE NATION OF JAPAN, WOULD THIS AGE OF WAR DAY AND NIGHT LAST FOR A HUNDRED YEARS?
STOP SPEAKING OF NOTHING BUT YOUR LINEAGE! WHAT HAVE THE SHOGUN AND THE MINISTER OF THE LEFT BEEN DOING ALL THIS TIME?
ARE YOU SAYING YOU WILL SLAY ME, THE DAUGHTER OF THE MINISTER OF THE LEFT!?


HARUNOBU FLEW INTO A FRENZY
AS SOON AS KOKO CAME UP
HARUNOBU WAS TWENTY-ONE
AT THE TIME HE WAS STILL
A SENSITIVE YOUTH

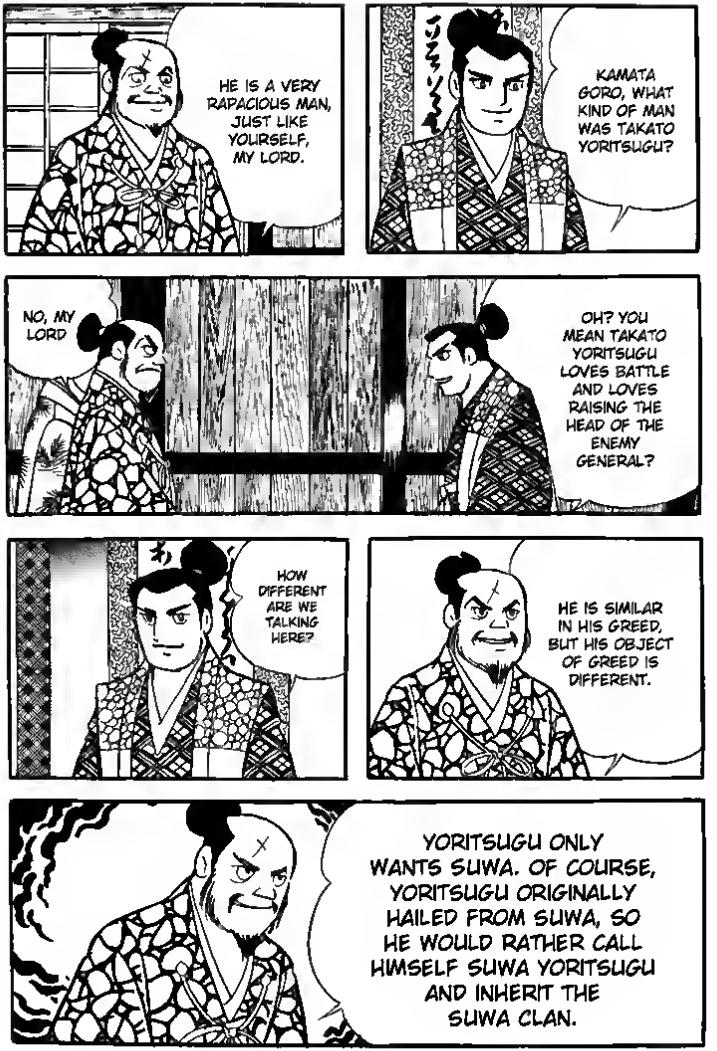
TAKEDA SHINGEN

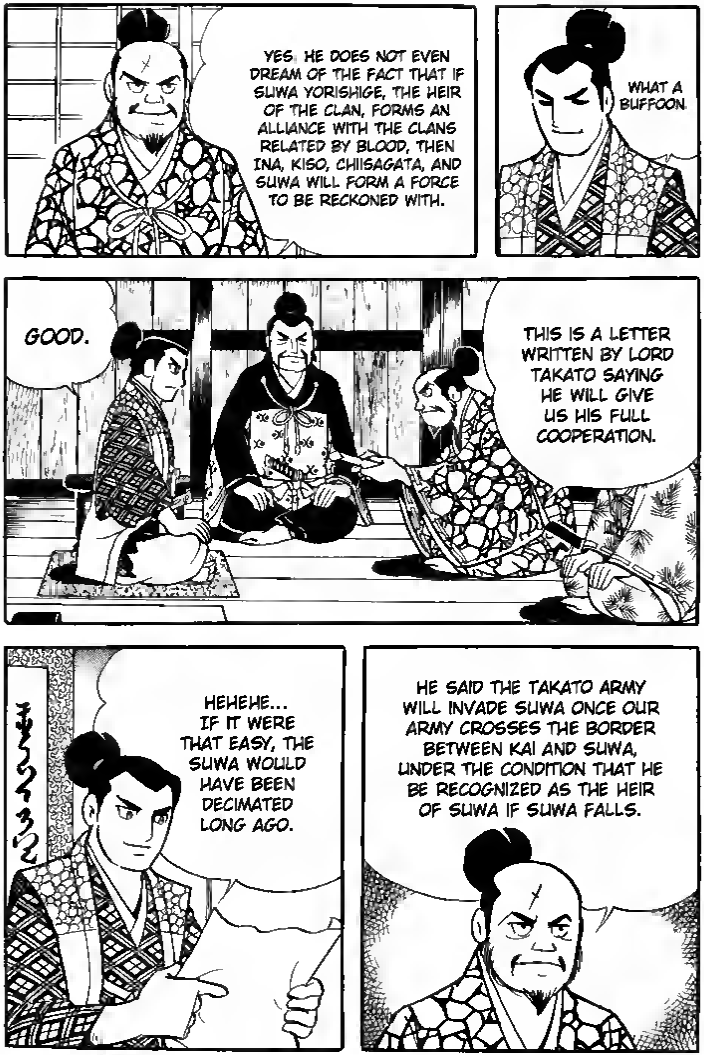
TRANSLATION: SYSTEMATIC CHAOS
PROOFREADING: ANGELOFCHAOTICX
CLEANING: WRIGHT
TYPESETTING: KRA

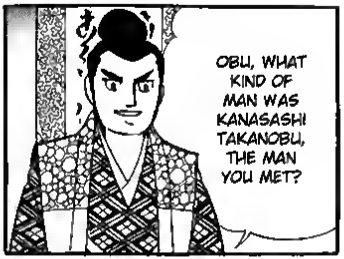
CHAPTER 15: BEACON OF DESTRUCTION



But this was only an apparent peace. There was much more scheming going on behind the curtains.
KAMATA GORO, OBU HYOBU, GOOD WORK ON YOUR SECRET MISSION.
YES, MY LORD.

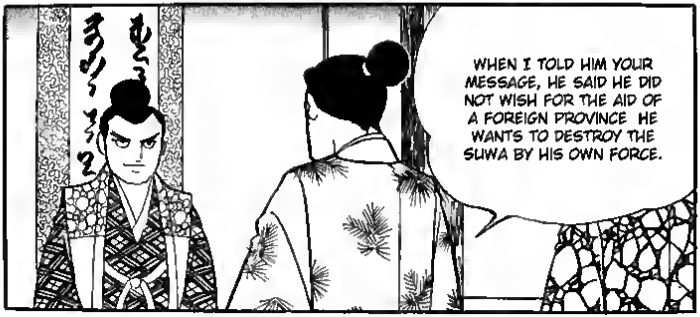

HE IS A VERY RAPACIOUS MAN, JUST LIKE YOURSELF, MY LORD.
KAMATA GORO, WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS TAKATO YORITSUGU?
NO, MY LORD
OH? YOU MEAN TAKATO YORITSUGU LOVES BATTLE AND LOVES RAISING THE HEAD OF THE ENEMY GENERAL?
HOW DIFFERENT ARE WE TALKING HERE?
HE IS SIMILAR IN HIS GREED, BUT HIS OBJECT OF GREED IS DIFFERENT.
YORITSUGU ONLY WANTS SUWA. OF COURSE, YORITSUGU ORIGINALLY HAILED FROM SUWA, SO HE WOULD RATHER CALL HIMSELF SUWA YORITSUGU AND INHERIT THE SUWA CLAN.


YES. HE DOES NOT EVEN DREAM OF THE FACT THAT IF SUWA YORISHIGE, THE HEIR OF THE CLAN, FORMS AN ALLIANCE WITH THE CLANS RELATED BY BLOOD, THEN INA, KISO, CHIISAGATA, AND SUWA WILL FORM A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.
WHAT A BUFFOON.
GOOD.
THIS IS A LETTER WRITTEN BY LORD TAKATO SAYING HE WILL GIVE US HIS FULL COOPERATION.
HEHEHE... IF IT WERE THAT EASY, THE SUWA WOULD HAVE BEEN DECIMATED LONG AGO.
HE SAID THE TAKATO ARMY WILL INVADE SUWA ONCE OUR ARMY CROSSES THE BORDER BETWEEN KAI AND SUWA, UNDER THE CONDITION THAT HE BE RECOGNIZED AS THE HEIR OF SUWA IF SUWA FALLS.

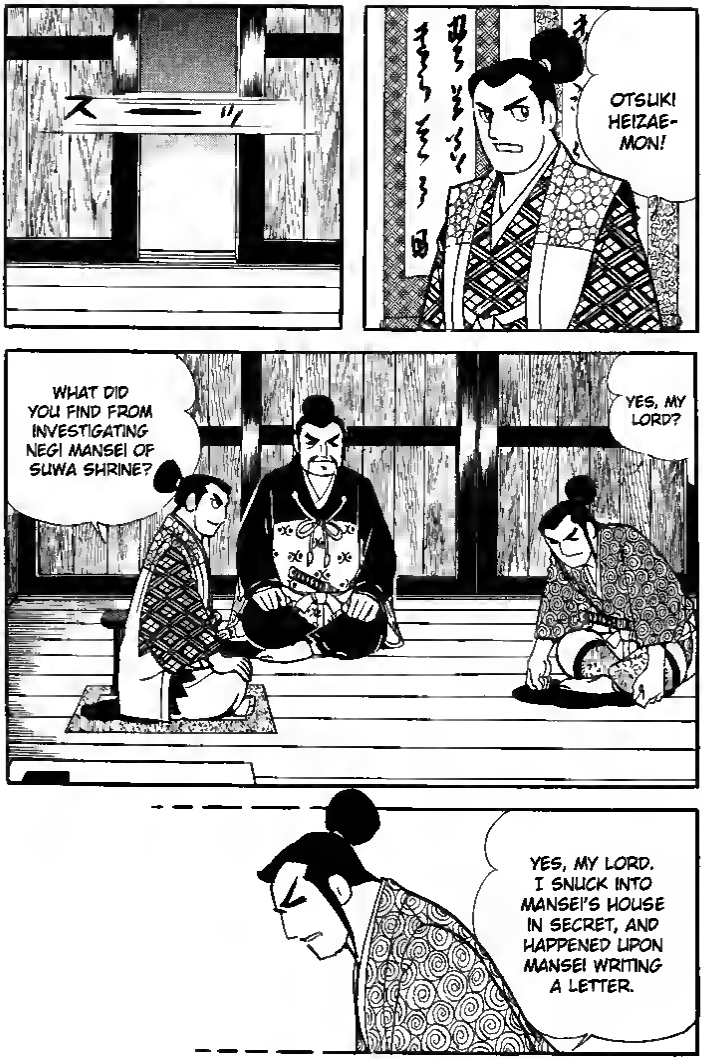


BUT THE KANASASHI CLAN WAS DESTROYED BY SUWA YORISHIGE'S FATHER, SUWA YORITAKA, AND SINCE THEN, THE SURVIVING KANASASHIS PLOTTED THEIR REVIVAL AT EVERY TURN.

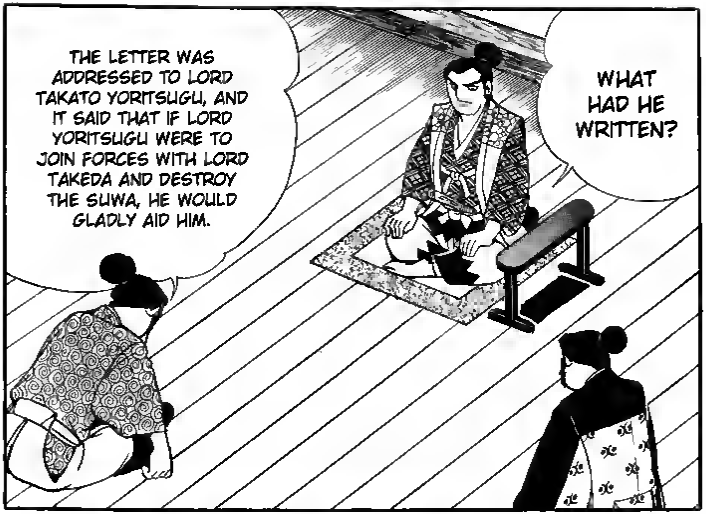
SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, SUWA SHRINE WAS DIVIDED INTO THE UPPER AND LOWER SHRINES... THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE UPPER SHRINE WAS FROM THE SUWA CLAN, AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LOWER SHRINE FROM THE KANASASHI CLAN


WHEN I TOLD HIM YOUR MESSAGE, HE SAID HE DID NOT WISH FOR THE AID OF A FOREIGN PROVINCE. HE WANTS TO DESTROY THE SUWA BY HIS OWN FORCE.

I ASKED HIM WHAT IF THE ARMY OF KAI WERE TO INVADE SUWA, AND HE SAID THAT HE WOULD TAKE INDEPENDENT ACTION WHEN IT HAPPENS.
AND WHAT OF IT?
YES, MY LORD
GOOD WORK, BOTH OF YOU. YOU ARE DISMISSED
THAT IS GOOD. IF WE CAN CONFIRM THAT, THAT IS ENOUGH.


OTSUKI HEIZAE-MON!
YES, MY LORD?
WHAT DID YOU FIND FROM INVESTIGATING NEGI MANSEI OF SUWA SHRINE?
YES, MY LORD. I SNUCK INTO MANSEI'S HOUSE IN SECRET, AND HAPPENED UPON MANSEI WRITING A LETTER.

YAWN...
THIS SHOULD DO IT.

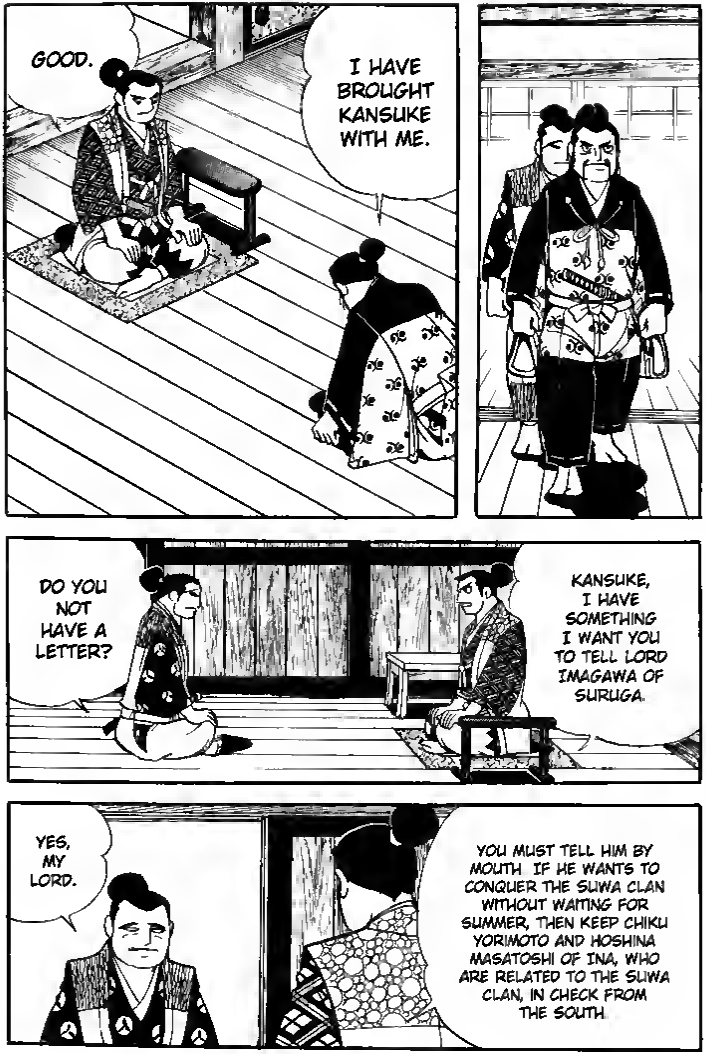

THE LETTER WAS ADDRESSED TO LORD TAKATO YORITSUGU, AND IT SAID THAT IF LORD YORITSUGU WERE TO JOIN FORCES WITH LORD TAKEDA AND DESTROY THE SUWA, HE WOULD GLADLY AID HIM.
WHAT HAD HE WRITTEN?

YES, MY LORD.
SO WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT NEGI MANSEI WILL JOIN TAKATO.

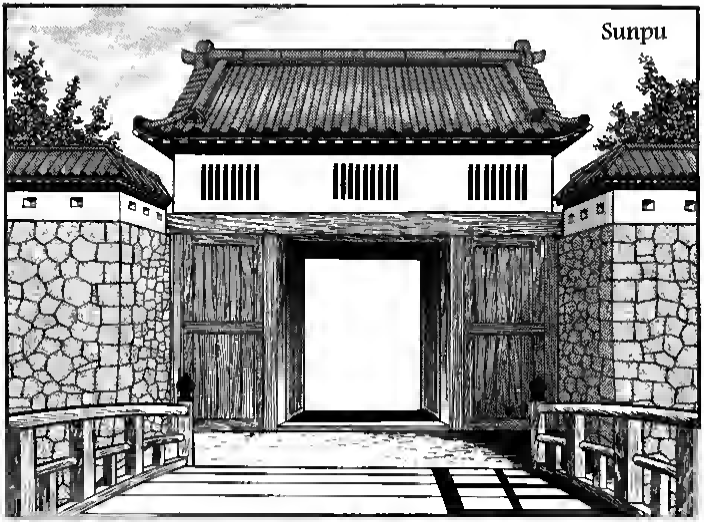
YES, MY LORD.
VERY WELL. GOOD WORK.
HEHE.. HIS NINJA SKILLS ARE ALWAYS EXCEPTIONAL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, OUR CHANCE?
NOW I'VE SOUNDED OUT THE PEOPLE BACKING THE SUWA CLAN. IT'S OUR CHANCE NOW.

NO, THIS IS A PLOY.
SO YOU'RE FINALLY GOING TO BESIEGE THE SUWA.
ORDER THE TSUGANE AND THE OBI TO STRIKE THE SUWA'S BORDERS. ONCE THE SUWA HAVE PREPARED THEIR FORCES, WE SEND AN ARMY OF TWO THOUSAND.
ONCE OUR ARMY REACHES THE BORDER, WE TURN BACK. AND WE REPEAT THIS.
SO YOU INTEND TO WAIT FOR THIS MOMENT TO ATTACK! BUT DO YOU THINK THAT WILL WORK?
THE SUWA WILL HAVE TO PREPARE THEIR FORCES EVERY TIME. BUT EVENTUALLY, THE ENEMY SOLDIERS WILL STOP COMING.

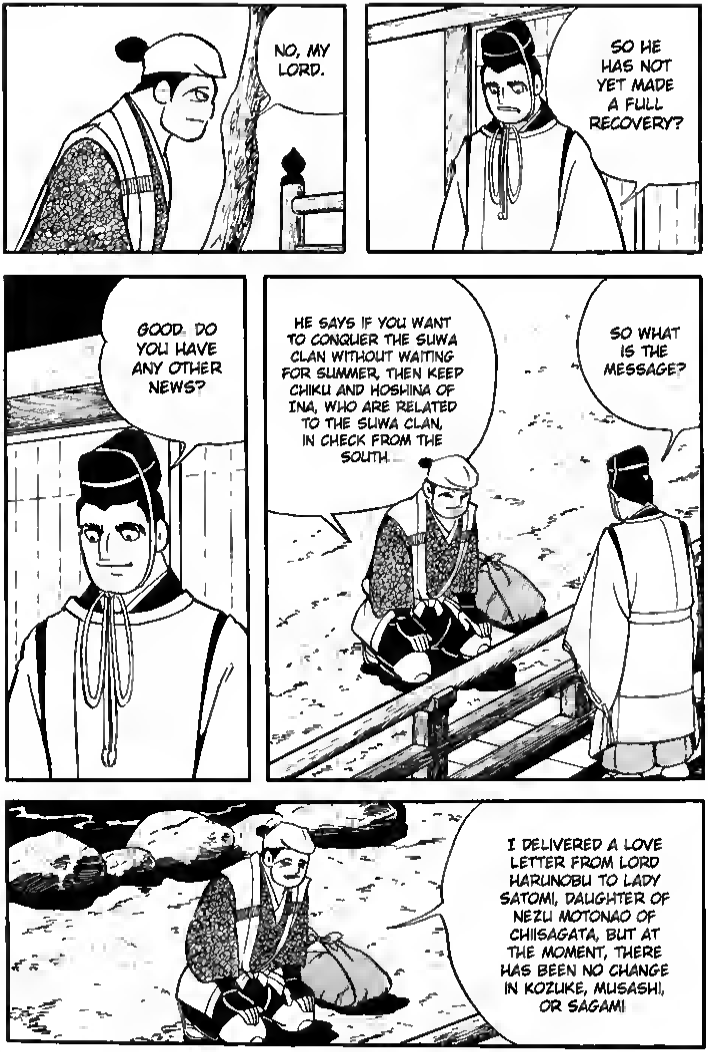
BUT I HAVE ANOTHER PLAN.
THE SUWA HAVE OGASAWARA NAGATOKI AS AN ALLY, AND THE GENERALS OF INA WHO ARE BLOOD RELATIONS OF THE SUWA WILL NOT STAY SILENT IF TAKATO YORITSUGU ALLIES WITH THE TAKEDA.
YES, MY LORD.
SUMMON YAMAMOTO KANSUKE.

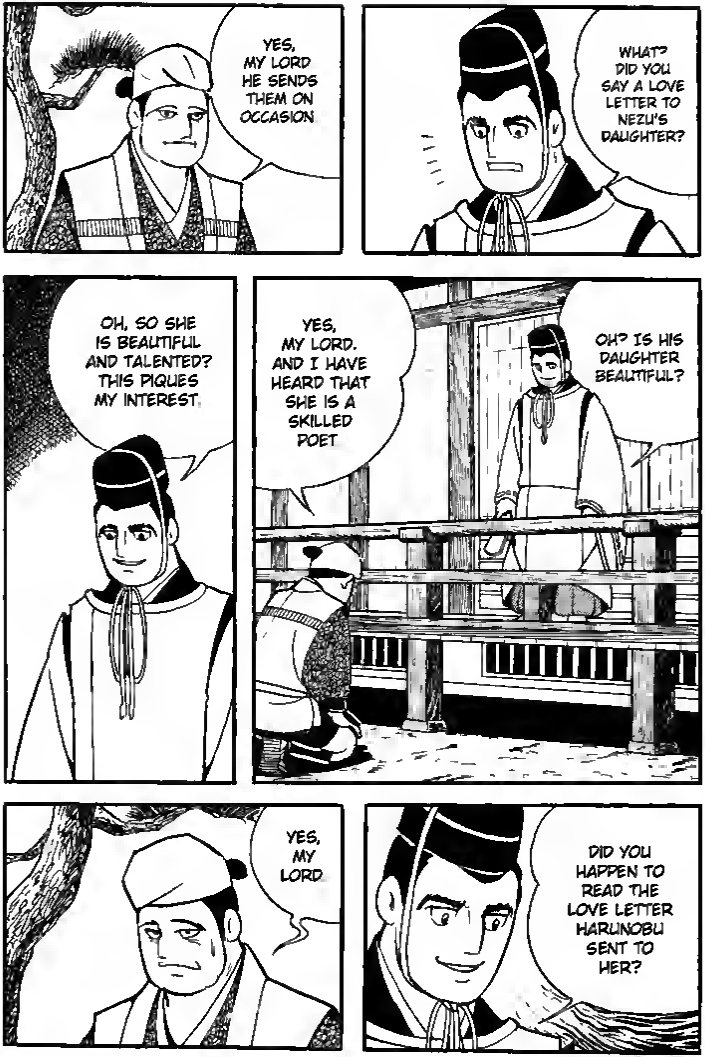

GOOD.
I HAVE BROUGHT KANSUKE WITH ME.
DO YOU NOT HAVE A LETTER?
KANSUKE, I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO TELL LORD IMAGAWA OF SURUGA.
YES, MY LORD.
YOU MUST TELL HIM BY MOUTH. IF HE WANTS TO CONQUER THE SUWA CLAN WITHOUT WAITING FOR SUMMER, THEN KEEP CHIKU YORIMOTO AND HOSHINA MASATOSHI OF INA, WHO ARE RELATED TO THE SUWA CLAN, IN CHECK FROM THE SOUTH.

I WANT YOU TO SEND THIS LOVE LETTER TO SATOMI OF THE NEZU CLAN
OH, BUT BEFORE THAT...
YES, MY LORD.
I AM COUNTING ON YOU.
LOVE LETTER ..?
Kansuke was sad. He felt as though he was still being treated as Imagawa's snake.

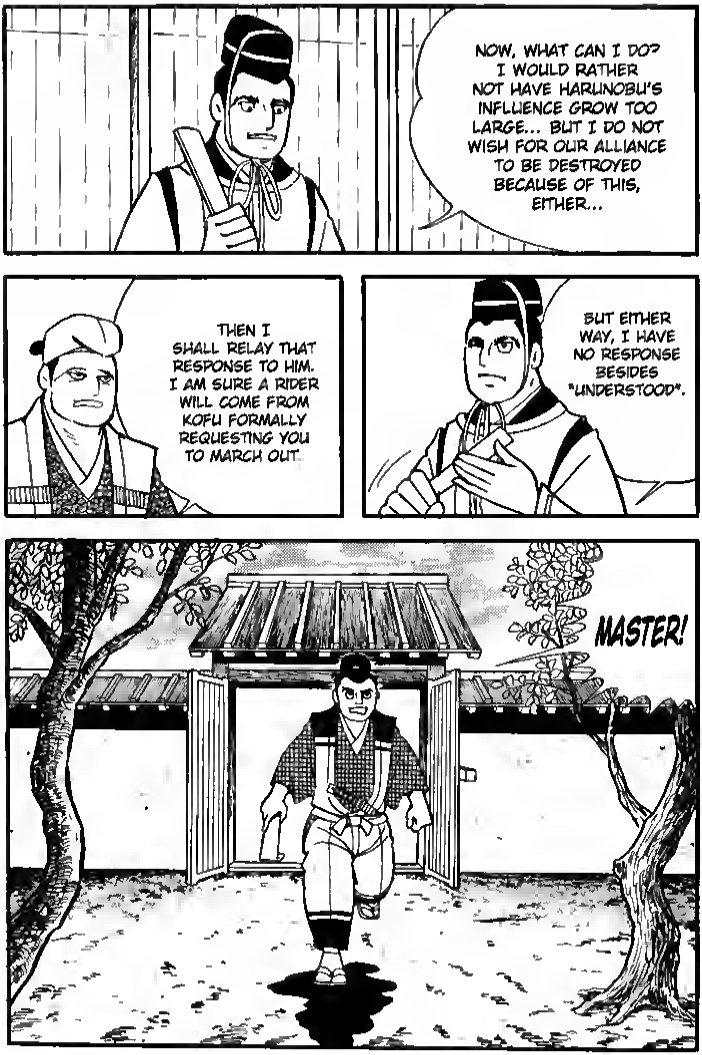

Sunpu

YES, MY LORD. I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM LORD HARUNOBU.
OH, KANSUKE! IS THERE SOMETHING URGENT? I AM ENTERTAINING A GUEST FROM KYOTO WITH A POETRY PARTY.
HE IS MUCH BETTER, THOUGH SOMETIMES HE HAS A LIGHT COUGH, OR A SLIGHT FEVER WHEN EXHAUSTED.
HOW HAS HARUNOBU BEEN AFTER HIS ILLNESS?


NO, MY LORD.
SO HE HAS NOT YET MADE A FULL RECOVERY?
GOOD. DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER NEWS?
HE SAYS IF YOU WANT TO CONQUER THE SUWA CLAN WITHOUT WAITING FOR SUMMER, THEN KEEP CHIKU AND HOSHINA OF INA, WHO ARE RELATED TO THE SUWA CLAN, IN CHECK FROM THE SOUTH.
SO WHAT IS THE MESSAGE?
I DELIVERED A LOVE LETTER FROM LORD HARUNOBU TO LADY SATOMI, DAUGHTER OF NEZU MOTONAO OF CHIISAGATA, BUT AT THE MOMENT, THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN KOZUKE, MUSASHI, OR SAGAMI

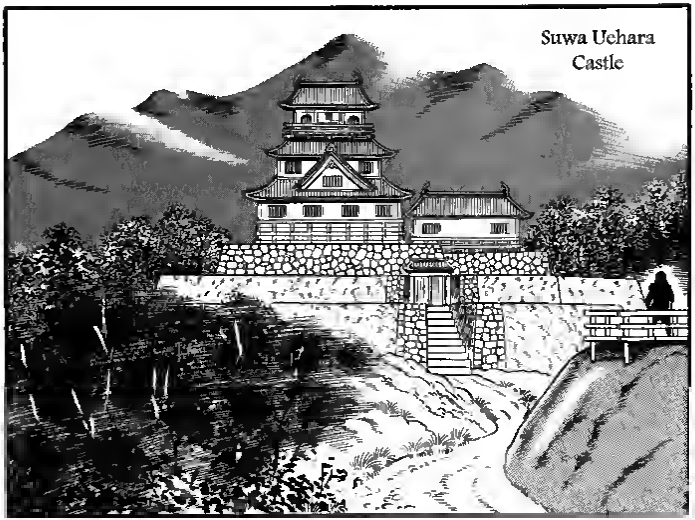

YES, MY LORD HE SENDS THEM ON OCCASION
WHAT? DID YOU SAY A LOVE LETTER TO NEZU'S DAUGHTER?
OH, SO SHE IS BEAUTIFUL AND TALENTED? THIS PIQUES MY INTEREST
YES, MY LORD. AND I HAVE HEARD THAT SHE IS A SKILLED POET
OH? IS HIS DAUGHTER BEAUTIFUL?
YES, MY LORD
DID YOU HAPPEN TO READ THE LOVE LETTER HARUNOBU SENT TO HER?

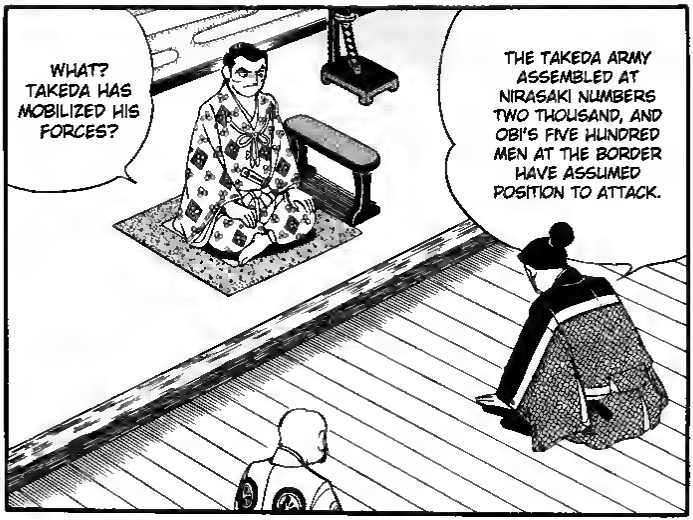
BY THE WAY, WHAT RESPONSE SHOULD I GIVE HIM?
HARUNOBU NEVER CEASES TO SURPRISE ME...
IT WAS ONE VERSE OF A LOVE POEM... "THE MORE I AM AWAY FROM YOU, THE MORE I MISS YOU, THE MORE I MISS YOU, I CANNOT BEAR IT." IT MEANS HE WISHES TO SLEEP WITH LADY SATOMI AS SOON AS HE CAN
I REFER TO MARCHING YOUR TROOPS INTO INA ALONG THE TENRYU RIVER, AND KEEPING CHIKU YORIMOTO AND HOSHINA MASATOSHI IN CHECK.
RESPONSE TO WHAT?


NOW, WHAT CAN I DO? I WOULD RATHER NOT HAVE HARUNOBU'S INFLUENCE GROW TOO LARGE... BUT I DO NOT WISH FOR OUR ALLIANCE TO BE DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THIS, EITHER...
THEN I SHALL RELAY THAT RESPONSE TO HIM. I AM SURE A RIDER WILL COME FROM KOFU FORMALLY REQUESTING YOU TO MARCH OUT.
BUT EITHER WAY, I HAVE NO RESPONSE BESIDES "UNDERSTOOD".
MASTER!

A RIDER FROM TAKEDA JUST ARRIVED TO DELIVER THIS!
KANSUKE, HARUNOBU HAS OFFICIALLY REQUESTED ME TO MARCH OUT.
HARUNOBU IS TRULY A DISDAINFUL FELLOW. HE PURPOSEFULLY SENT YOU ON A DETOUR SO THAT WHEN YOU ARRIVED IN SUNPU, HE WOULD HAVE HIS RIDER ON STANDBY IN THE AREA REQUEST ME TO MARCH OUT.

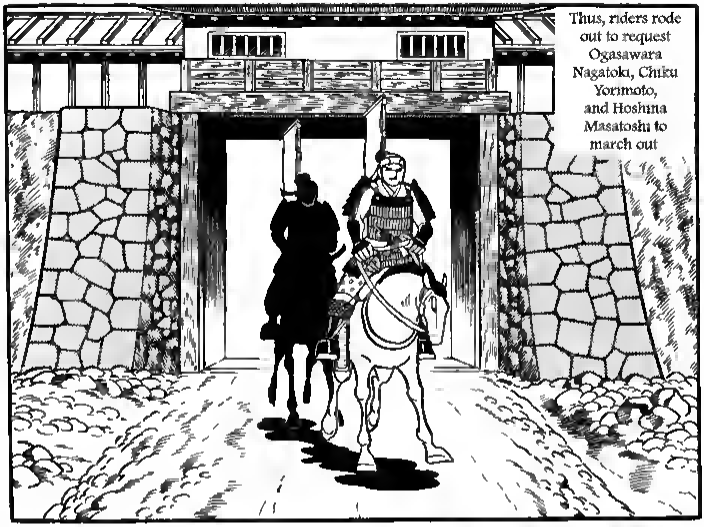
WE CANNOT REFUSE.
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
YES, MY LORD.
WE WILL MARCH ON INA, BUT WITH ONLY THREE HUNDRED MEN. THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO KEEP THEM IN CHECK.
STILL, HE IS SUCH AN ARROGANT COUNTRYMAN.

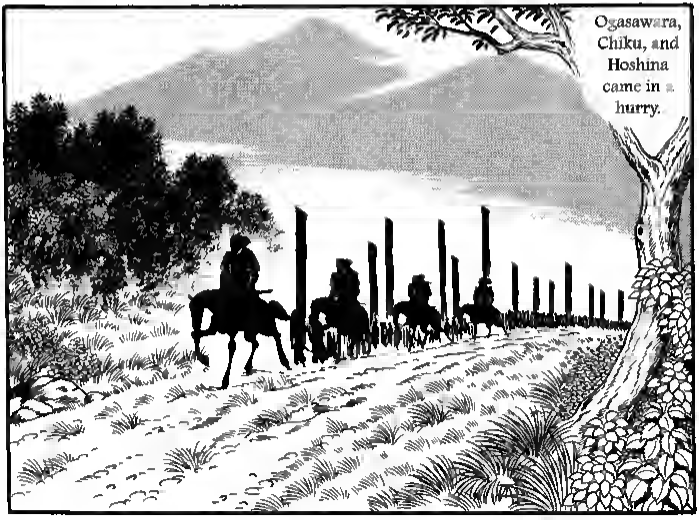

Suwa Uchara
Castle

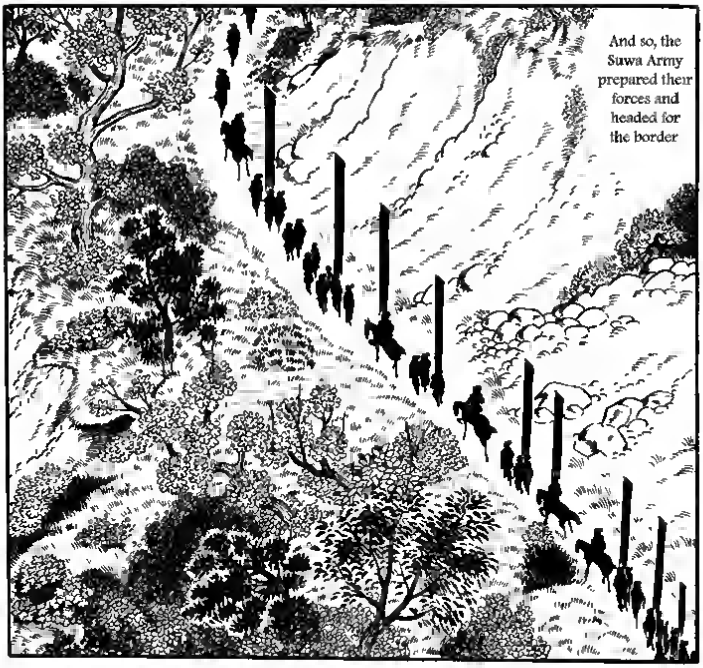

WHAT? TAKEDA HAS MOBILIZED HIS FORCES?
THE TAKEDA ARMY ASSEMBLED AT NIRASAKI NUMBERS TWO THOUSAND, AND OBI'S FIVE HUNDRED MEN AT THE BORDER HAVE ASSUMED POSITION TO ATTACK.

BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, I HAVE RECEIVED WORD THAT TAKATO IS PREPARING FOR BATTLE
NOW THAT THE ENEMY IS HERE, WE MUST PREPARE FOR BATTLE AT ONCE!
WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO STAND ON TWO FEET IF A REBELLION WERE TO START.
WHAT? TAKATO ?
PLEASE WAIT, MY LORD.
VERY WELL. CONFIRM THE REASON TAKATO IS PREPARING FOR WAR.

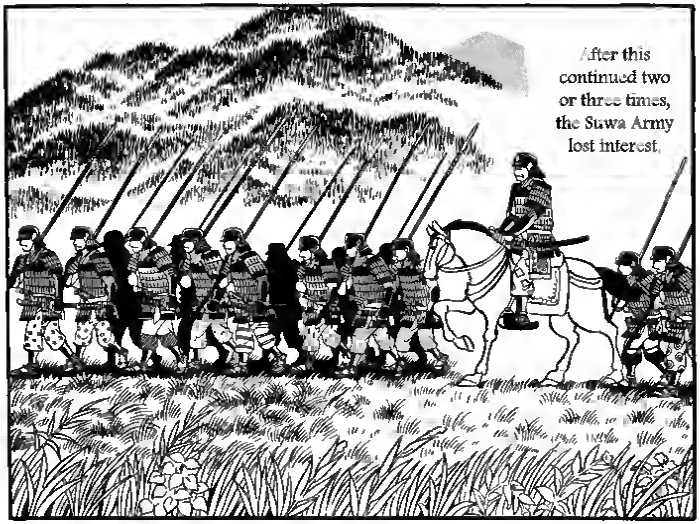
IF YOU ARE STILL CONCERNED, I WILL GO TO TAKATO AND CONFIRM FOR YOU.
THE SUWA AND TAKATO CLANS ARE CONNECTED BY BLOOD. IF THE TAKATO CLAN HAS BEGUN PREPARING FOR WAR, IT MUST BE TO SERVE AS REINFORCEMENTS FOR THE HEAD CLAN. WE CANNOT BE SUSPECTING OUR ALLIES IN SUCH A CRITICAL MOMENT, OR THE ENEMY WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.
OHH, SO YOU WILL GO FOR ME, MANSEI? AS A PRIEST, YOU WILL NOT CAUSE OUR RELATIONSHIP TO SOUR.
GREAT. I AM DEPENDING ON YOU.
THEN I WILL BE ON MY WAY.
YES, MY LORD!
VERY WELL! SEND RIDERS TO OGASAWARA, CHIKU, AND HOSHINA!

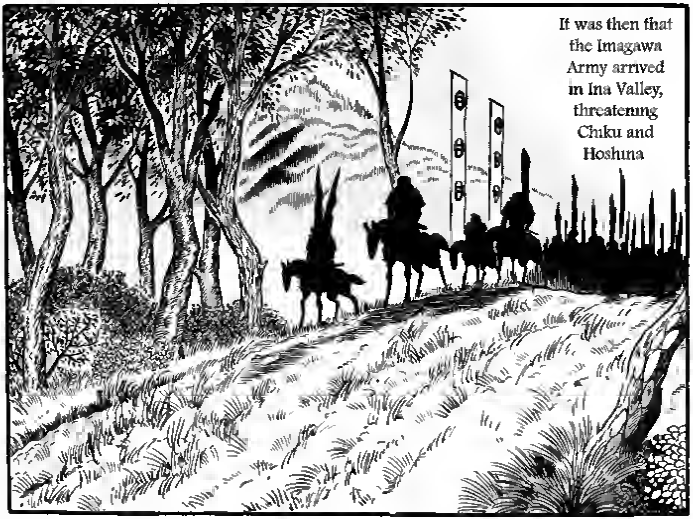

Thus, riders rode out to request Ogasawara Nagatoki, Chiku Yorimoto, and Hoshina Masatoshi to march out


Ogasawara, Chiku, and Hoshina came in a hurry.


And so, the Suwa Army prepared their forces and headed for the border

But there was no sign of the Takeda Army on the border.


After this continued two or three times, the Suwa Army lost interest.


If was then that the Imagawa Army arrived in Ina Valley, threatening Chiku and Hoshina

I SEE. SO OGASAWARA WILL NO LONGER ANSWER TO SUWA'S REQUESTS?
YES, MY LORD. THEY HAVE SENT THEIR FORCES FOR NOTHING MANY A TIME, SO NOW THEY ARE IGNORING THEIR REQUESTS.
AND WHAT DOES YORI-SHIGE SAY?
THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN, PRIEST CHINO IZU, WHO IS EMPHASIZING THAT THIS IS THE TAKEDA'S SCHEME.

SO HE DOES NOT PAY HEED TO PRIEST IZU?
HE SAYS THAT TAKEDA HAS BECOME SCARED OF HIS VALOR.
YES, MY LORD.
GOOD. CONTINUE YOUR RECONNAISSANCE.
I AM FILLED WITH AWE AT YOUR FORESIGHT AND DEEP DESIGN, MASTER.
IT SEEMS THE TIME HAS COME, NOBUKATA.

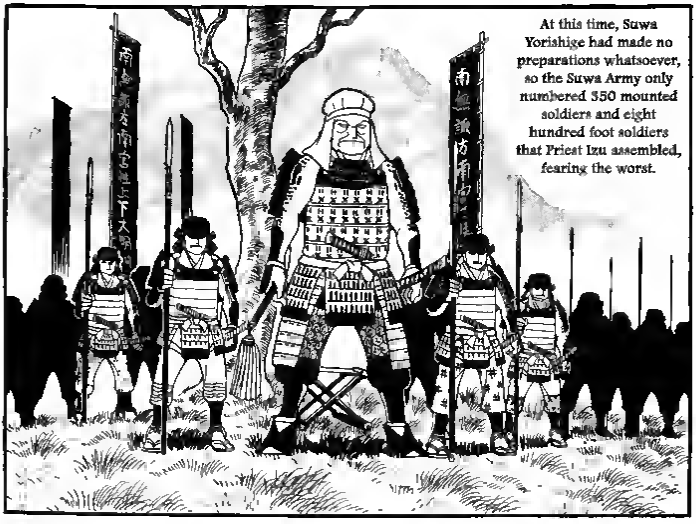
TAKEDA SHINGEN

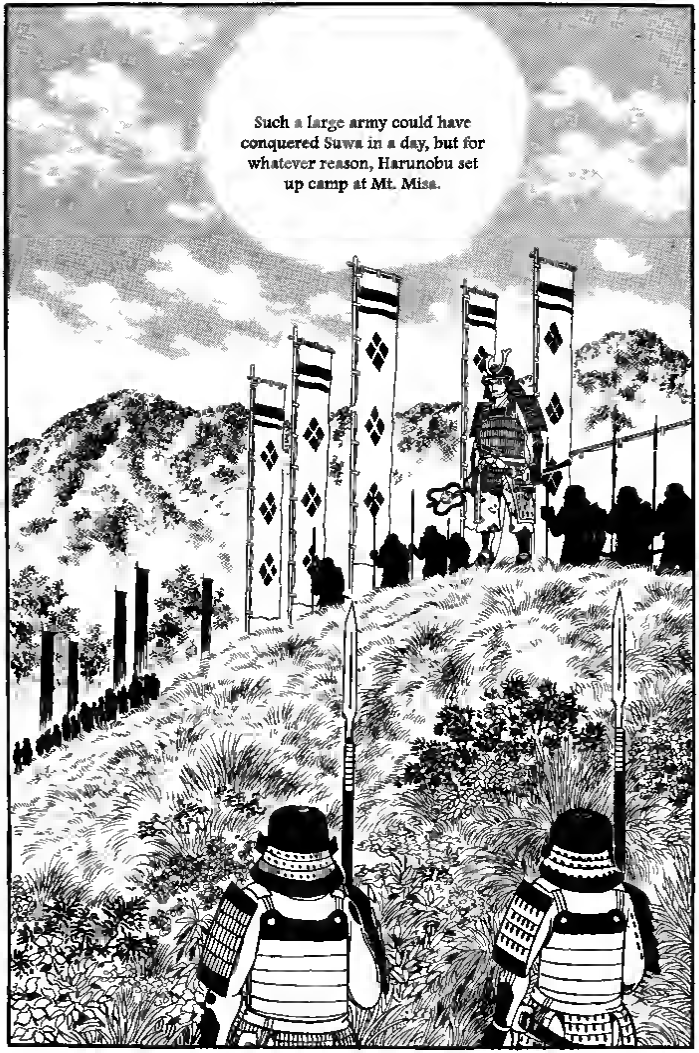
TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CLEANED BY WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY KRA
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 15

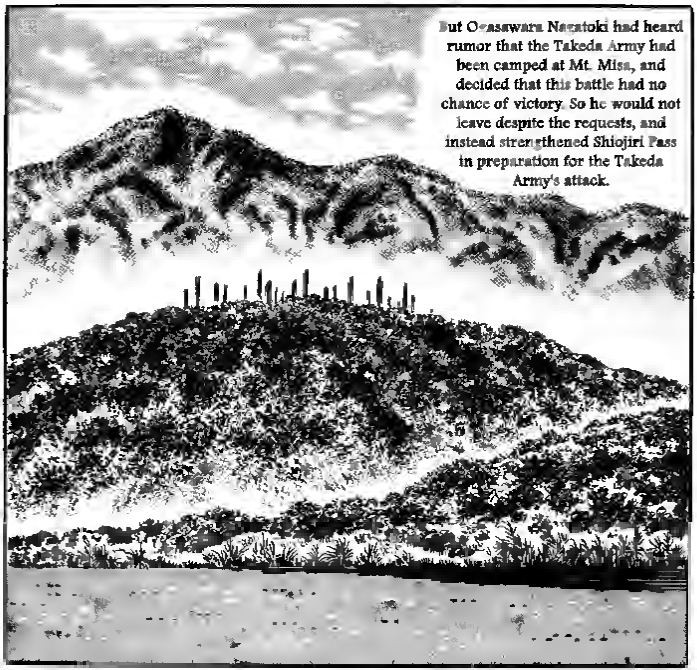
Chapter 16: Suicide Corps

The Takeda Army invaded the Suwa domain with seven hundred mounted soldiers, and three thousand foot soldiers.


At this time, Suwa Yorishige had made no preparations whatsoever, so the Suwa Army only numbered 350 mounted soldiers and eight hundred foot soldiers that Priest Izu assembled, fearing the worst.


Such a large army could have conquered Suwa in a day, but for whatever reason, Harunobu set up camp at Mt. Misa.

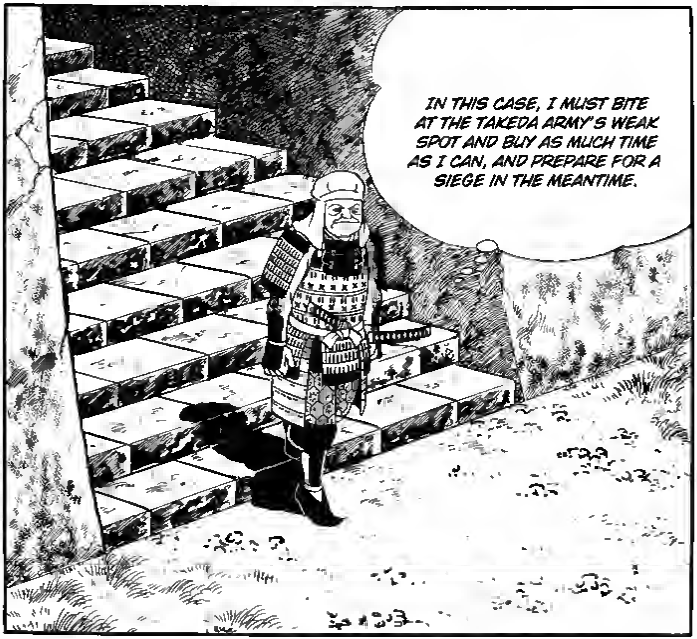
Messengers from Suwa hurried to Ogasawara Nagatoki and Takato Yoritsugu, requesting that they march out.


But Ogasawara Nagatoki had heard rumor that the Takeda Army had been camped at Mt. Misa, and decided that this battle had no chance of victory. So he would not leave despite the requests, and instead strengthened Shiojiri Pass in preparation for the Takeda Army's attack.

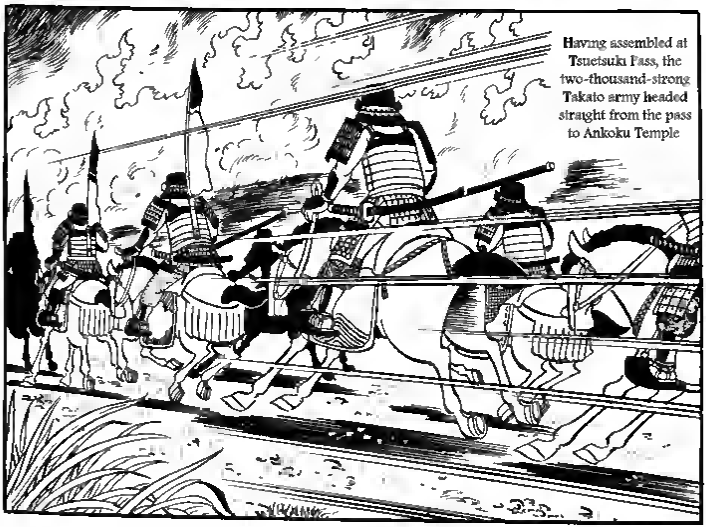
Uehara Castle
OHH! SO TAKATO YORITSUGU HAS ACCEPTED OUR REQUEST!
BEHOLD, PRIEST IZU! WHEN THE TIME COMES, BLOOD RELATION MEANS EVERYTHING! YORITSUGU HAS WRITTEN FOR ME TO REST ASSURED, AS HE WILL BE LEADING HIS WHOLE ARMY THROUGH TSUETSUKI PASS INTO SUWA!

AS SUWA AND TAKATO ARE ON ILL TERMS, WE MUST CONFIRM WHETHER OR NOT HE HAS ANY DUPLICITY.
BUT IF THIS WAS LORD YORITSUGU'S TRUE INTENTION, WOULD IT NOT BE THE WAY OF THE WARRING STATES TO SEND A HOSTAGE WITH THE LETTER BEFORE ENTERING SUWA?
IMPOSSIBLE! HOW CAN I DISTRUST SOMEONE AT THIS POINT? IF WE LOSE HERE, THE SUWA CLAN THAT HAS BEEN AROUND SINCE THE AGE OF THE GODS WILL BE OBLITERATED! WOULD YORITSUGU REALLY PLOT TREASON AT SUCH A TIME?
NO. I HAVE SENT MANSEI TO TAKATO, AND HAVE OBTAINED A WRITTEN PLEDGE THAT HE INTENDS NO DUPLICITY. IF I ASK FOR ANY MORE, YORITSUGU WILL NOT AID US.
LORD YORITSUGU HAS ONLY BUT ONE WISH: THE PROPER HEADSHIP OF THE SUWA CLAN. IT COULD BE VERY WELL THAT THE TAKEDA HAVE USED THIS AS BAIT SO HE WOULD DEFECT. WE MUST NOT LET LORD YORITSUGU INTO SUWA UNTIL HE SENDS A HOSTAGE.

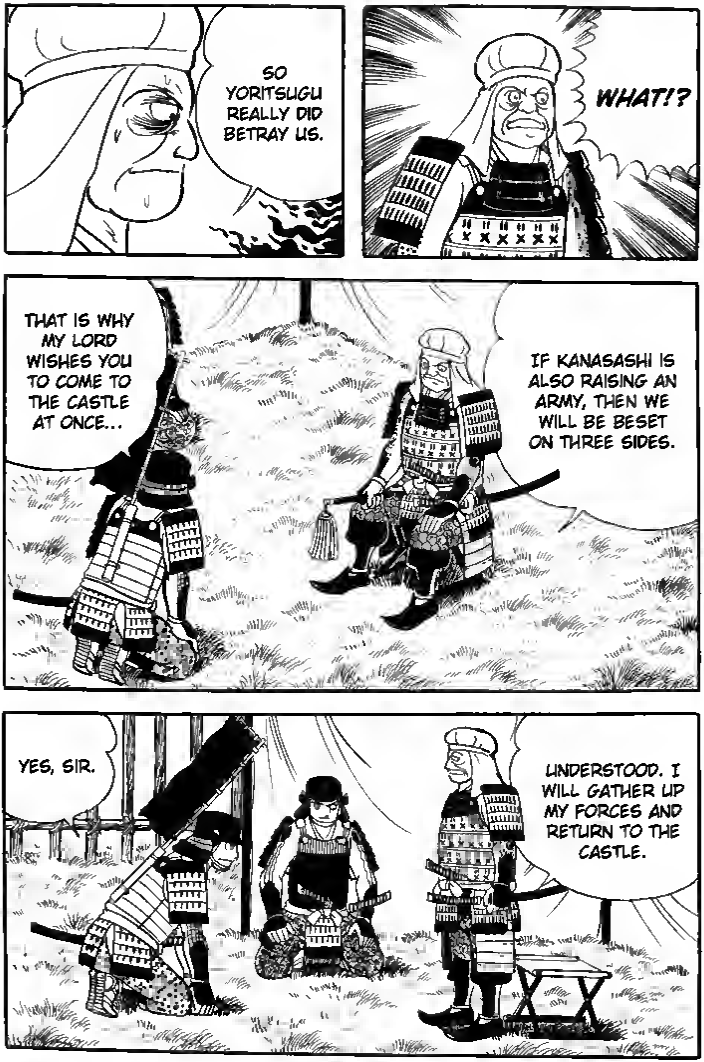
THOUGH WE ARE ON ILL TERMS NORMALLY, BLOOD AIDS BLOOD WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT. SPEAK NO MORE OF THIS...


IN THIS CASE, I MUST BITE AT THE TAKEDA ARMY'S WEAK SPOT AND BUY AS MUCH TIME AS I CAN, AND PREPARE FOR A SIEGE IN THE MEANTIME.

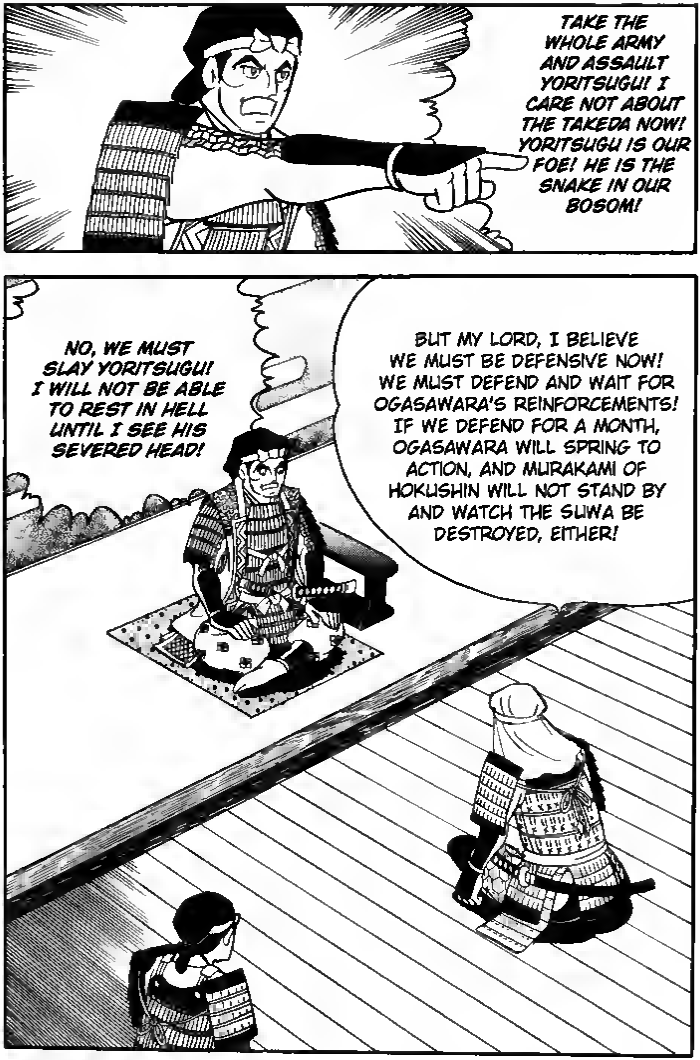
On July 2nd, Priest Chino Izu's predictions turned out right

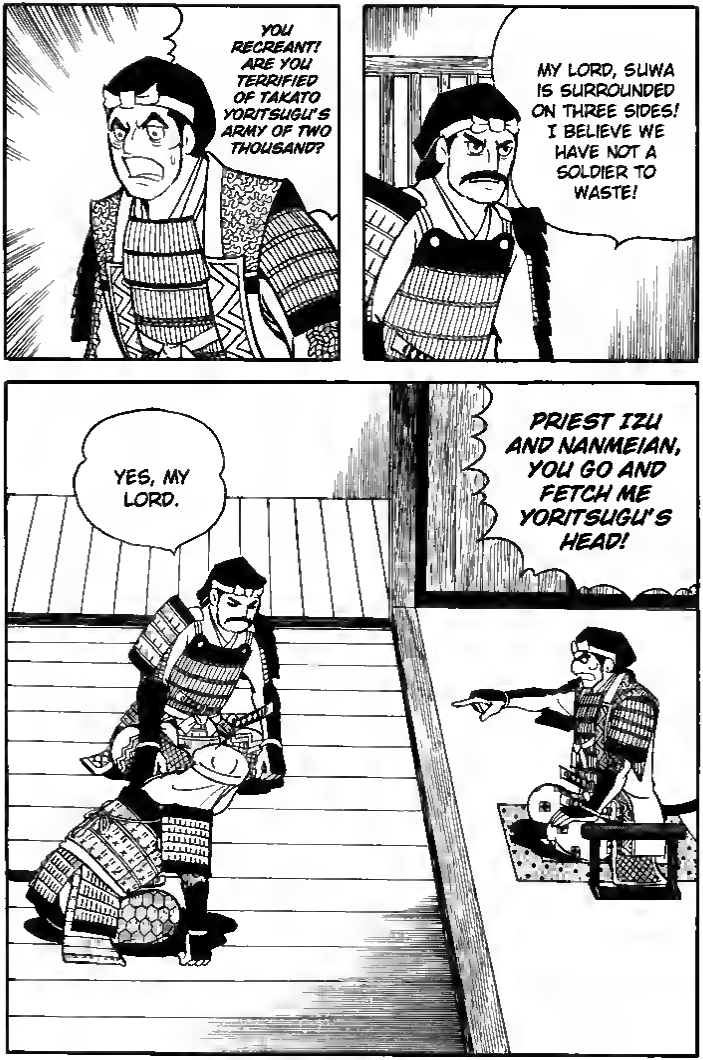

Having assembled at Tsuetsuki Pass, the two-thousand-strong Takato army headed straight from the pass to Ankoku Temple

RETURN TO THE CASTLE? BUT I INTEND TO KEEP THE TAKEDA ARMY IN CHECK HERE!
PRIEST IZU, MY LORD HAS ORDERED YOU TO RETURN TO THE CASTLE AT ONCE!
THERE IS NO TIME FOR THAT! WE HAVE AN UTMOST CRISIS ON OUR HANDS! LORD YORITSUGU HAS DEFECTED AND BETRAYED US ASSAULTING ANKOKU TEMPLE, AND KANASASHI TAKANOBU HAS RAISED HIS BANNER IN LOWER SUWA AT THE SAME TIME!


SO YORITSUGU REALLY DID BETRAY US.
WHAT!?
THAT IS WHY MY LORD WISHES YOU TO COME TO THE CASTLE AT ONCE...
IF KANASASHI IS ALSO RAISING AN ARMY, THEN WE WILL BE BESET ON THREE SIDES.
YES, SIR.
UNDERSTOOD. I WILL GATHER UP MY FORCES AND RETURN TO THE CASTLE.

Uehara
Castle
PRIEST IZU, YOU WERE RIGHT. YORITSUGU HAS BETRAYED US.
DAMN THAT YORITSUGU! HE IS A BRANCH CLAN OF SUWA, AND YET HE WANTS TO STEAL THE HEADSHIP! HE IS A THIEF!

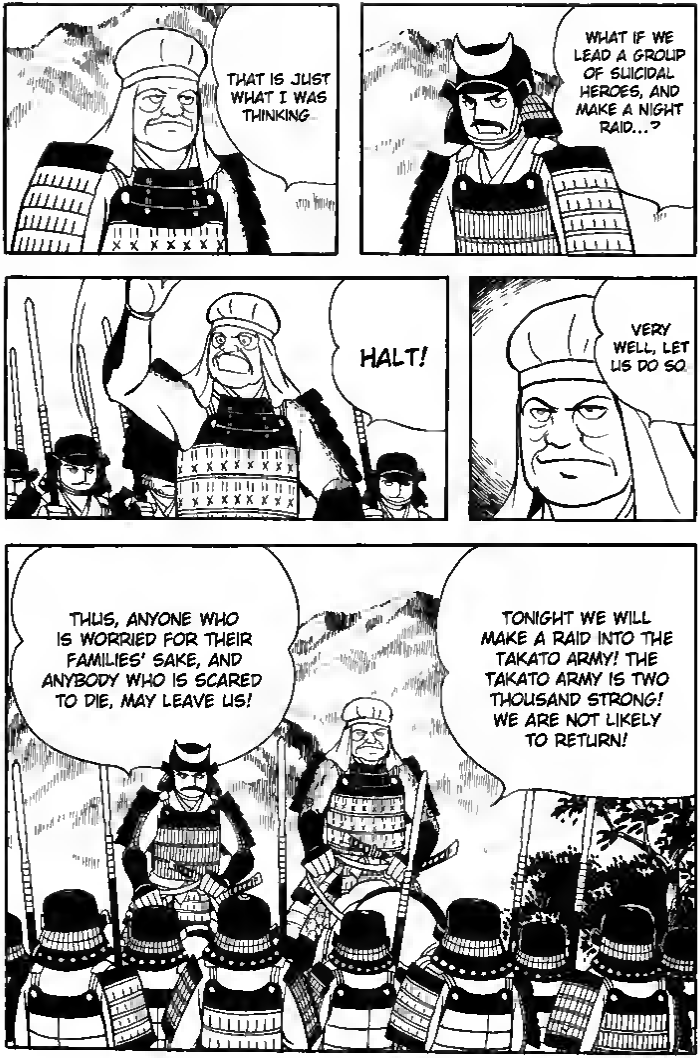

TAKE THE WHOLE ARMY AND ASSAULT YORITSUGU! I CARE NOT ABOUT THE TAKEDA NOW! YORITSUGU IS OUR FOE! HE IS THE SNAKE IN OUR BOSOM!
NO, WE MUST SLAY YORITSUGU! I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REST IN HELL UNTIL I SEE HIS SEVERED HEAD!
BUT MY LORD, I BELIEVE WE MUST BE DEFENSIVE NOW! WE MUST DEFEND AND WAIT FOR OGASAWARA'S REINFORCEMENTS! IF WE DEFEND FOR A MONTH, OGASAWARA WILL SPRING TO ACTION, AND MURAKAMI OF HOKUSHIN WILL NOT STAND BY AND WATCH THE SUWA BE DESTROYED, EITHER!


YOU RECREANT! ARE YOU TERRIFIED OF TAKATO YORITSUGU'S ARMY OF TWO THOUSAND?
MY LORD, SUWA IS SURROUNDED ON THREE SIDES! I BELIEVE WE HAVE NOT A SOLDIER TO WASTE!
PRIEST IZU AND NANMEIAN, YOU GO AND FETCH ME YORITSUGU'S HEAD!
YES, MY LORD.

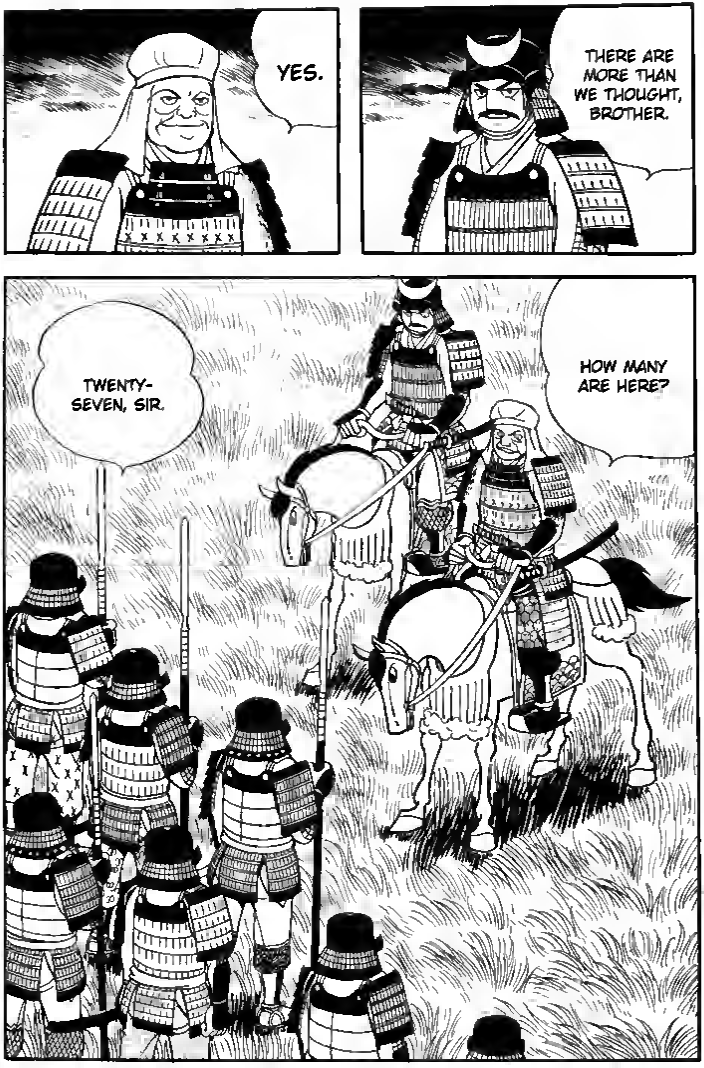
IF WE RESIST HIM ANY FURTHER, WE WOULD BE DEFYING OUR LORD.

BUT THERE IS NO WAY TO CALM HIM.
BROTHER, OUR LORD HAS LOST HIS HEAD.

PRECISELY. WE WOULD ONLY BE KILLING OFF OUR OWN MEN.
BROTHER, THE ENEMY IS TWO THOUSAND STRONG. WE CANNOT HOPE TO DO ANYTHING WITH A MERE HUNDRED OR TWO SOLDIERS.


THAT IS JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING
WHAT IF WE LEAD A GROUP OF SUICIDAL HEROES, AND MAKE A NIGHT RAID...?
HALT!
VERY WELL, LET US DO SO.
THUS, ANYONE WHO IS WORRIED FOR THEIR FAMILIES' SAKE, AND ANYBODY WHO IS SCARED TO DIE, MAY LEAVE US!
TONIGHT WE WILL MAKE A RAID INTO THE TAKATO ARMY! THE TAKATO ARMY IS TWO THOUSAND STRONG! WE ARE NOT LIKELY TO RETURN!

WHISPER WHISPER
WHISPER WHISPER
THOSE WHO WISH TO DIE WITH US, GATHER IN FRONT OF THAT CEDAR!
TEN, AT THE VERY MOST.
HOW MANY DO YOU SUPPOSE WILL COME, BROTHER?


YES.
THERE ARE MORE THAN WE THOUGHT, BROTHER.
HOW MANY ARE HERE?
TWENTY-SEVEN, SIR.

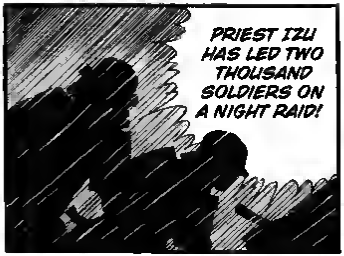
YES, SIR.
GOOD. AND YOU ALL WILL DIE WITH US?
NOW THAT OUR LORD HAS FALLEN INTO CRISIS, WE MUST BOLDLY CAST AWAY OUR LIVES FOR OUR LORD. THIS IS THE SIGN OF A TRUE WARRIOR.
NOW LISTEN! TONIGHT, WE MAKE A RAID ON THE MOUNTAIN BEHIND ANKOKU TEMPLE! OUR TARGET IS THE HEAD OF TAKATO YORITSUGU!

NOW, WE SHALL DIE FOR THE SUWA CLAN!

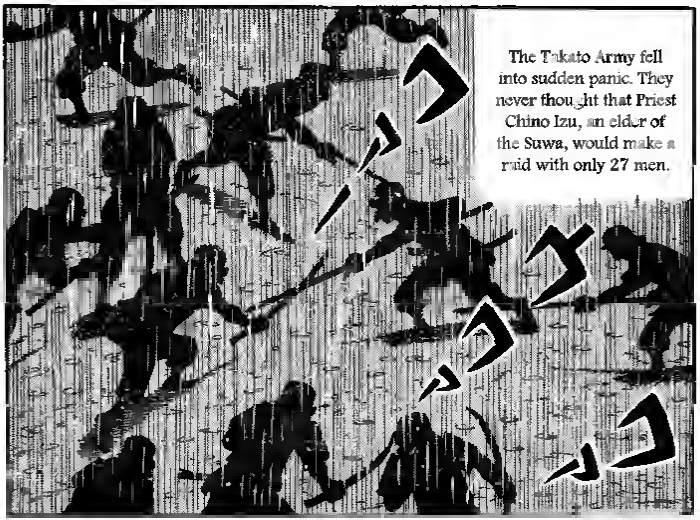
I SUPPOSE THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME WE SEE THE CASTLE, BROTHER.
YES.

In the grey of morning on July 4th, a heavy rain started to fall.
HUH?

IT'S A RAID! PRIEST IZU HAS LED TWO THOUSAND SOLDIERS ON A NIGHT RAID!


PRIEST IZU HAS LED TWO THOUSAND SOLDIERS ON A NIGHT RAID!

AHHH! IT'S AN ENEMY RAID!


The Takato Army fell into sudden panic. They never thought that Priest Chino Izu, an elder of the Suwa, would make a raid with only 27 men.

The darkness worsened the Takato Army's confusion, and they began slaying their comrades

But even so, they were outnumbered. They could not get close to Takato Yoritsugu.

The 27 retainers were slain one by one.

YES.
THIS IS THE END, BROTHER.
ヤア

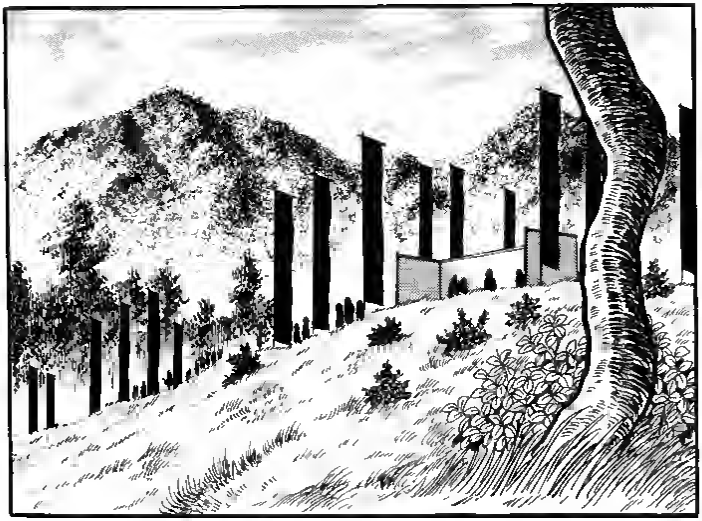
Meanwhile, flames rose from Uehara Castle. Suwa Yorishige had set fire to Uehara Castle, and leading his whole army, he fled to Kuwabara Castle.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

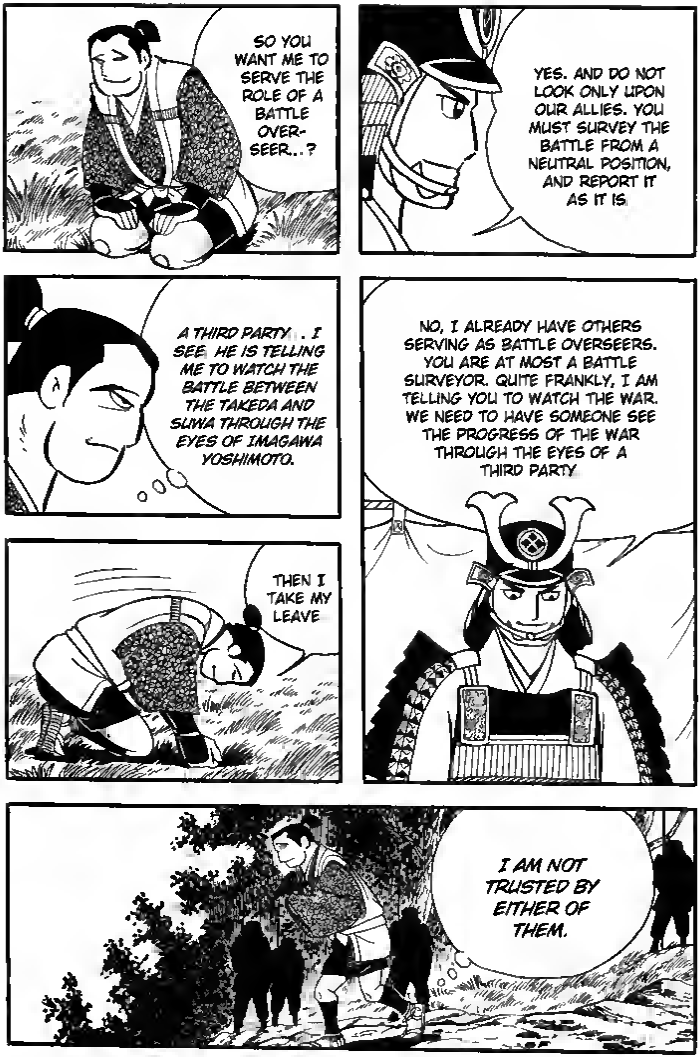
TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 16

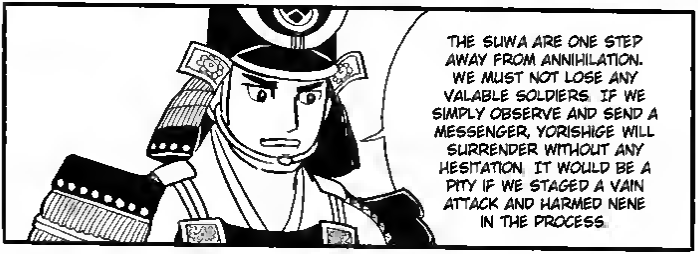
Chapter 17: Survey of Battle

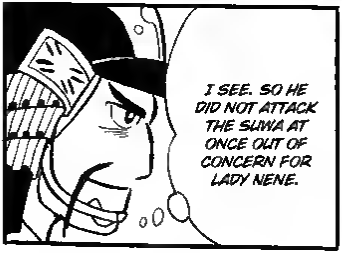


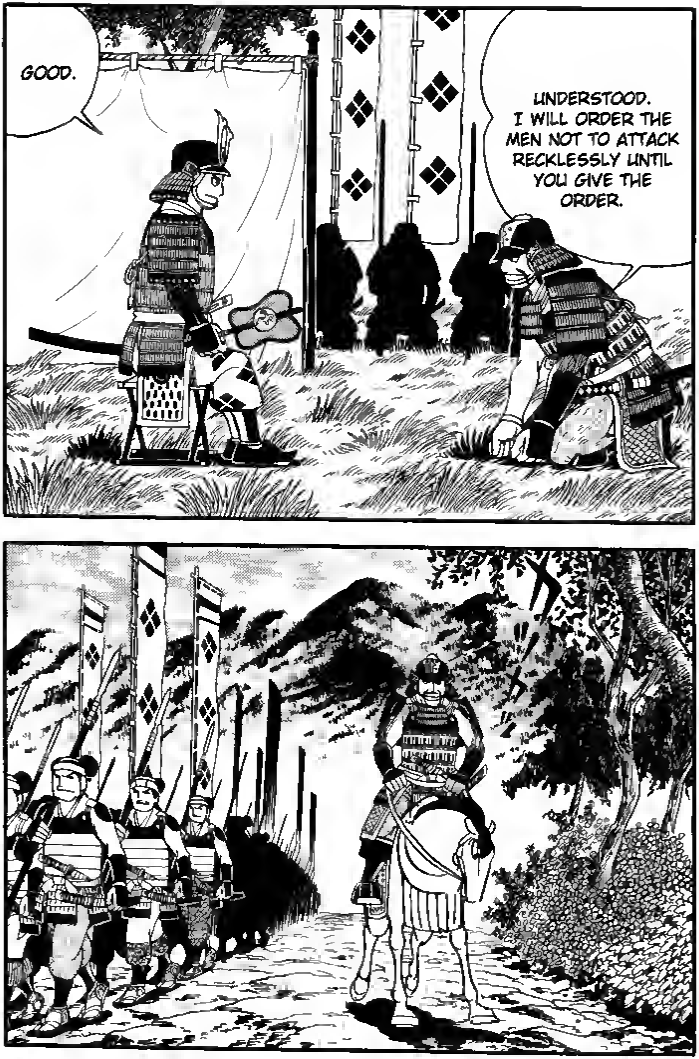
PRIEST CHINO IZU, CHINO NANMEIAN, AND THEIR TWENTY-SOME WARRIORS PERFORMED WITH GREAT EXCELLENCE.
WE HAVE LOST SOME GREAT MEN.
LAST NIGHT'S RAID LEFT A HUNDRED DEAD FROM THE TAKATO ARMY AND THREE HUNDRED WOUNDED, MOSTLY FRIENDLY ATTACKS.
YOU WISH ME TO SURVEY AGAIN?
KUWABARA CASTLE IS NEXT. GO AND SURVEY THE BATTLE

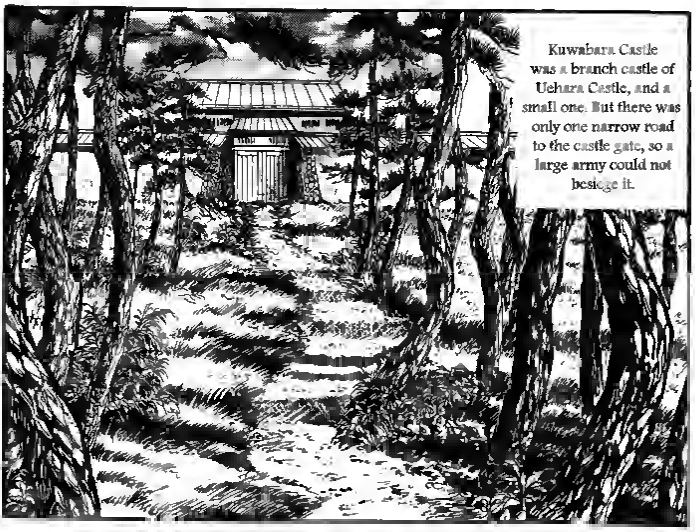

SO YOU WANT ME TO SERVE THE ROLE OF A BATTLE OVER-SEER..?
YES. AND DO NOT LOOK ONLY UPON OUR ALLIES. YOU MUST SURVEY THE BATTLE FROM A NEUTRAL POSITION, AND REPORT IT AS IT IS.
A THIRD PARTY . I SEE. HE IS TELLING ME TO WATCH THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE TAKEDA AND SUWA THROUGH THE EYES OF IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO.
NO, I ALREADY HAVE OTHERS SERVING AS BATTLE OVERSEERS. YOU ARE AT MOST A BATTLE SURVEYOR. QUITE FRANKLY, I AM TELLING YOU TO WATCH THE WAR. WE NEED TO HAVE SOMEONE SEE THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR THROUGH THE EYES OF A THIRD PARTY.
THEN I TAKE MY LEAVE
I AM NOT TRUSTED BY EITHER OF THEM.

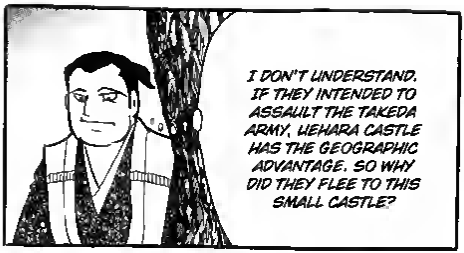
NOBUKATA, WE MUST NOT LOSE A SINGLE SOLDIER THIS BATTLE.
THAT IS A HARD THING TO ASK, MY LORD...

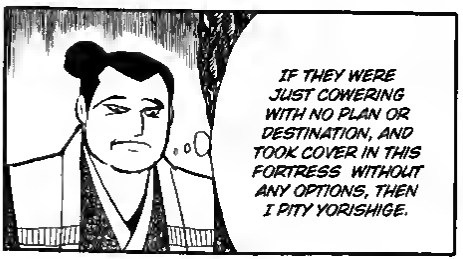

THE SUWA ARE ONE STEP AWAY FROM ANNIHILATION. WE MUST NOT LOSE ANY VALABLE SOLDIERS. IF WE SIMPLY OBSERVE AND SEND A MESSENGER, YORISHIGE WILL SURRENDER WITHOUT ANY HESITATION. IT WOULD BE A PITY IF WE STAGED A VAIN ATTACK AND HARMED NENE IN THE PROCESS.


I SEE. SO HE DID NOT ATTACK THE SUWA AT ONCE OUT OF CONCERN FOR LADY NENE.


GOOD.
UNDERSTOOD. I WILL ORDER THE MEN NOT TO ATTACK RECKLESSLY UNTIL YOU GIVE THE ORDER.


Kuwabara Castle was a branch castle of Uehara Castle, and a small one. But there was only one narrow road to the castle gate, so a large army could not besiege it.


I DON'T UNDERSTAND. IF THEY INTENDED TO ASSAULT THE TAKEDA ARMY, UEHARA CASTLE HAS THE GEOGRAPHIC ADVANTAGE. SO WHY DID THEY FLEE TO THIS SMALL CASTLE?


IF THEY WERE JUST COWERING WITH NO PLAN OR DESTINATION, AND TOOK COVER IN THIS FORTRESS WITHOUT ANY OPTIONS, THEN I PITY YORISHIGE.

OH! THERE'S THE TAKEDA'S VANGUARD!
WAAA UGH!
ヒュー
HUH?

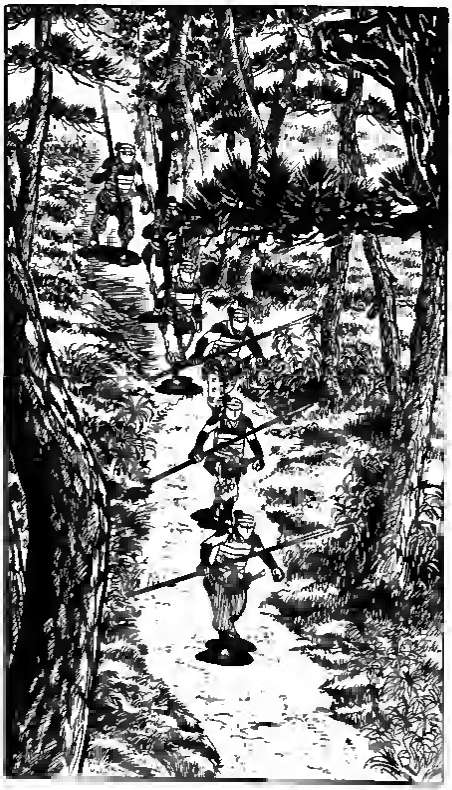
ヒュッ
ヒュッ
WAAAA
AUGH!
SHOOT
HIM
DOWN!
IT'S
HIM! HE'S
THROWING
STONES
AT US!

WAAA
UGH!
WAH!

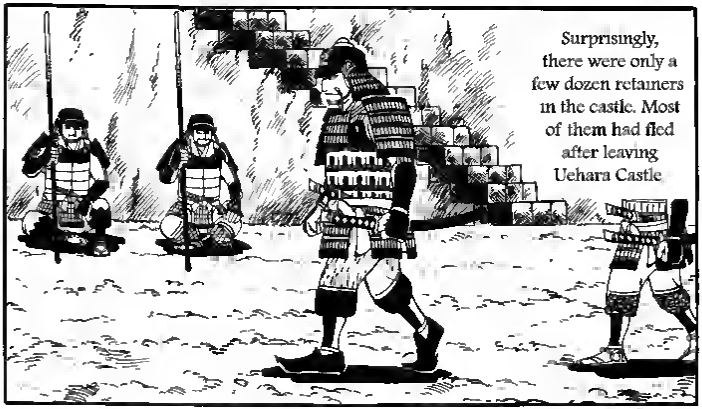
GWAA
AUGH!
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! HE'S AN ARTIST AT STONE THROWING!
JUST ONE MAN THROWING STONES?
SIR! THERE'S ONE MAN ON THE CASTLE WALLS THROWING STONES AT US!

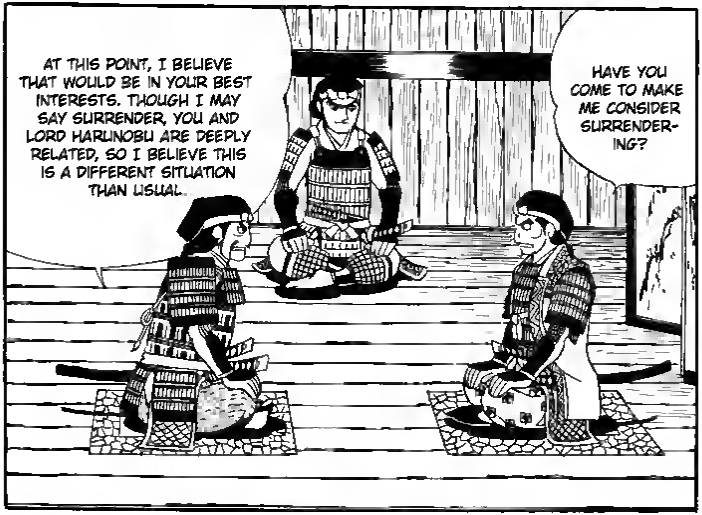
PAY HIM NO MIND! FALL BACK! FALL BACK! THE MASTER HAS SIGNALED FOR US TO RETREAT!

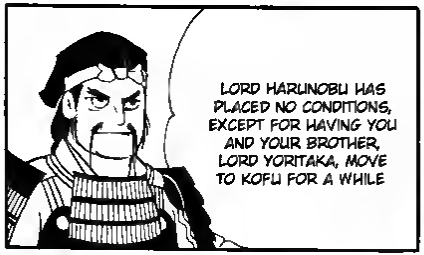
I SEE. THIS FORTRESS-LIKE CASTLE CANNOT HAVE ENOUGH PROVISIONS. THEY WILL SOON STARVE.

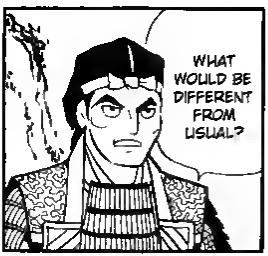


The next day, Itagaki Nobukata went to Kuwabara Castle as a truce bearer


Surprisingly, there were only a few dozen retainers in the castle. Most of them had fled after leaving Uehara Castle


AT THIS POINT, I BELIEVE THAT WOULD BE IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS. THOUGH I MAY SAY SURRENDER, YOU AND LORD HARUNOBU ARE DEEPLY RELATED, SO I BELIEVE THIS IS A DIFFERENT SITUATION THAN USUAL.
HAVE YOU COME TO MAKE ME CONSIDER SURRENDERING?


LORD HARUNOBU HAS PLACED NO CONDITIONS, EXCEPT FOR HAVING YOU AND YOUR BROTHER, LORD YORITAKA, MOVE TO KOFU FOR A WHILE

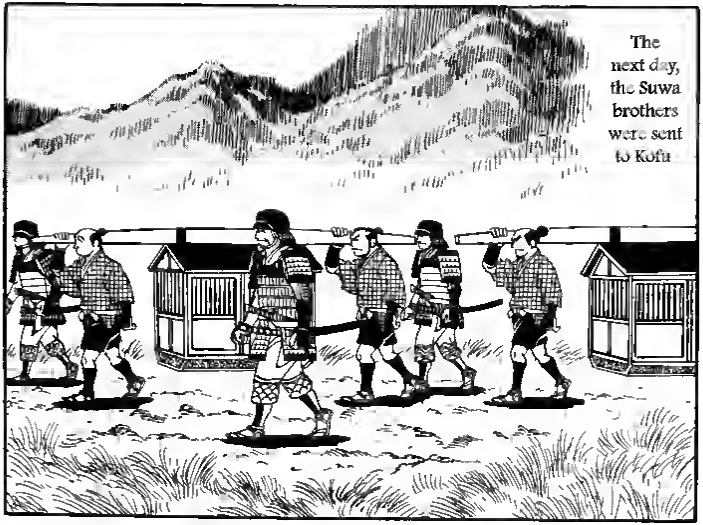

WHAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM USUAL?

I WOULD RATHER STAY HERE AND DIE THAN HAVE HIM TAKE ME TO KOFU AND GIVE THE DOMAIN OF SUWA AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF SUWA SHRINE TO TAKATO YORITSUGU! I CANNOT STAND THE THOUGHT OF TAKATO YORITSUGU DEFILING THE SACRED REALM!
YOU WOULD TAKE ME HOSTAGE?
HE WOULD NOT BE SATISFIED UNLESS YOU DO SO.
HE WOULD STILL HAVE PROMISE IF HE WOULD SIMPLY BEG FOR CLEMENCY.
WHAT A PITIFUL MAN. HE DOES NOT REALIZE THAT HIS CITIZENS HAVE ESTRANGED FROM HIM, HIS RETAINERS HAVE DESERTED HIM, AND HE HAS ALREADY FALLEN FROM THE SEAT OF LORDSHIP OF SUWA.
I HAVE ONLY ONE CONDITION FOR PEACE: YOU WILL NOT LET THIS DOMAIN OF SUWA FALL INTO THE HANDS OF TAKATO YORITSUGU! PROMISE ME THIS, AND I WILL GLADLY VACATE THIS CASTLE FOR LORD HARUNOBU.

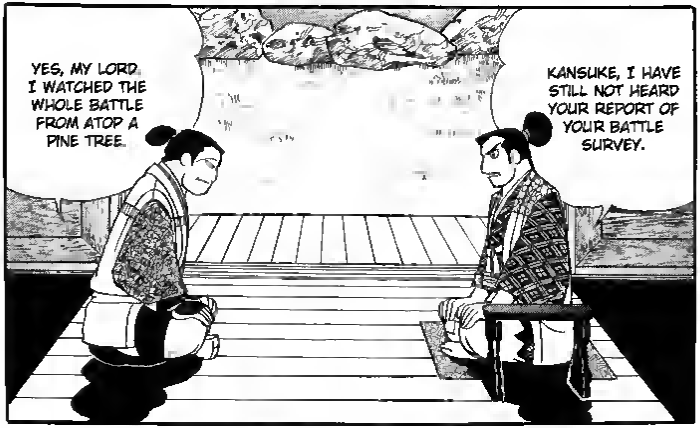
HOW CAN HE BE SO ARROGANT IN SUCH A CASTLE WITH NO RETAINERS?

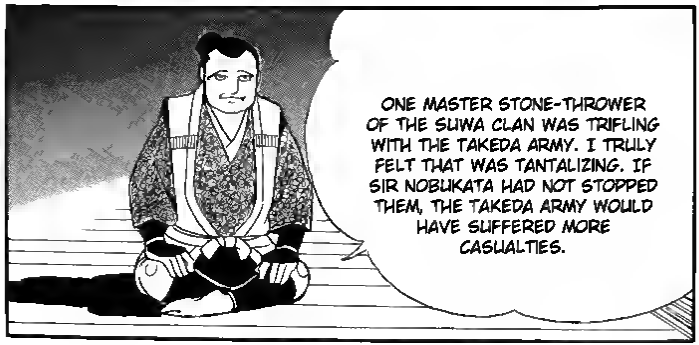
THEN I SHALL TELL LORD HARUNOBU SO

Harunobu has agreed to the terms, and even promised his life


The next day, the Suwa brothers were sent to Kofu

Harunobu made a triumphal return

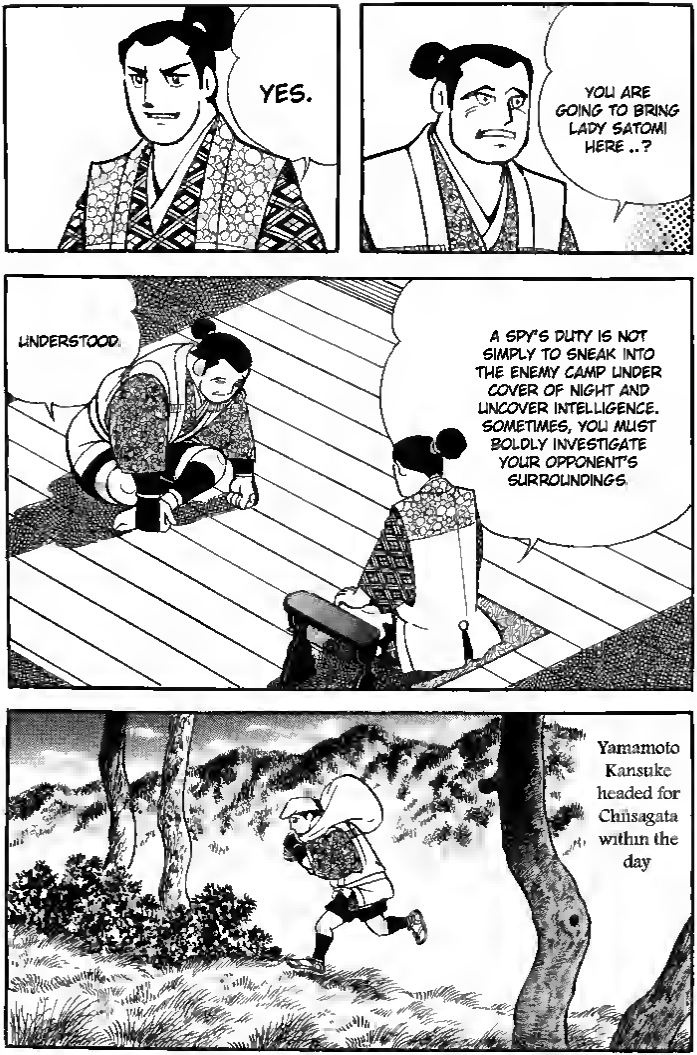

KANSUKE, I HAVE STILL NOT HEARD YOUR REPORT OF YOUR BATTLE SURVEY.
YES, MY LORD. I WATCHED THE WHOLE BATTLE FROM ATOP A PINE TREE.

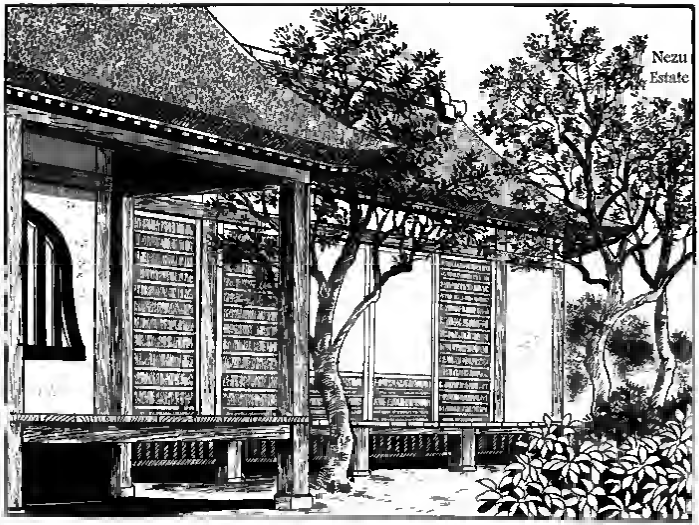

ONE MASTER STONE-THROWER OF THE SUWA CLAN WAS TRIFLING WITH THE TAKEDA ARMY. I TRULY FELT THAT WAS TANTALIZING. IF SIR NOBUKATA HAD NOT STOPPED THEM, THE TAKEDA ARMY WOULD HAVE SUFFERED MORE CASUALTIES.

AND WHAT OF THAT MASTER STONE-THROWER?
HMM...
I CANNOT CONDONE THE WAY THE TAKEDA ARMY FEARED THE STONE-THROWER AFTERWARDS, NOT EVEN SETTING A FIRE, JUST SLEEPING AMIDST THE PINE FOREST LIKE BANDITS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SCHEME.
OH. WELL DONE.
HE RAN INTO THE MOUNTAINS WHEN HE HEARD THAT SUWA HAD SURRENDERED. I FOLLOWED HIM AND CONFIRMED HIS LOCATION.
HIS NAME WAS BYAKKOJIMA TAROZAEMON. HE WAS BORN TO A SAMURAI OF LOWER KUWABARA, BUT HE HAD A NATURAL TALENT FOR THROWING STONES, AND HE WAS RECOGNIZED FOR BEING ABLE TO FELL BIRDS AND HUNT BEASTS WITH A STONE, AND THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME HE TOOK PART IN BATTLE.

WHAT?
STONE-THROWERS WOULD SERVE WELL IN A SURPRISE ATTACK.
HMM... I WOULD LIKE TO CREATE A STONE-THROWING COMPANY WITH SUCH A MAN AS HIM AS THE GENERAL.
I CANNOT BE TOO CAREFUL ABOUT HIM.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD, SO I BROUGHT HIM TO KOFU.
YOU WISH ME TO DELIVER ANOTHER LOVE LETTER?
BY THE WAY, I WANT YOU TO TAKE A MESSAGE TO LADY SATOMI OF CHIISAGATA

DO YOU REALLY THINK LADY SATOMI WILL ENJOY WAR TALES?
NO. THIS TIME, I WISH FOR YOU TO TELL HER THE STATE OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE TAKEDA AND SUWA.
NO. I WANT YOU TO STAY WITH LORD NEZU FOR A WHILE, THEN GO FROM CHIISAGATA TO SAKU AND SCOUT OUT THE SITUATION THERE.
IS THAT ALL YOU ASK OF ME?
SHE PROBABLY WON'T. SO I WANT YOU TO SHARE MUCH OF TALES LIKE BYAKKOJIMA TAROZAEMON'S.
AND THE SITUATION SURROUNDING LADY SATOMI.
JUST KEEP AN EYE ON LADY SATOMI'S SURROUNDINGS, AND INFORM ME IF ANYTHING HAPPENS. SHE IS A WOMAN I MUST SEND FOR EVENTUALLY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SURROUNDING LADY SATOMI...?


YES.
YOU ARE GOING TO BRING LADY SATOMI HERE ..?
UNDERSTOOD.
A SPY'S DUTY IS NOT SIMPLY TO SNEAK INTO THE ENEMY CAMP UNDER COVER OF NIGHT AND UNCOVER INTELLIGENCE. SOMETIMES, YOU MUST BOLDLY INVESTIGATE YOUR OPPONENT'S SURROUNDINGS.
Yamamoto Kansuke headed for Chisagata within the day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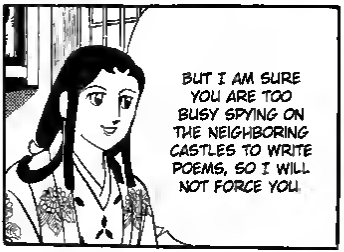
HAVE YOU COME HERE JUST TO TELL ME THESE WAR STORIES?
THAT WAS MY MASTER'S ORDERS.

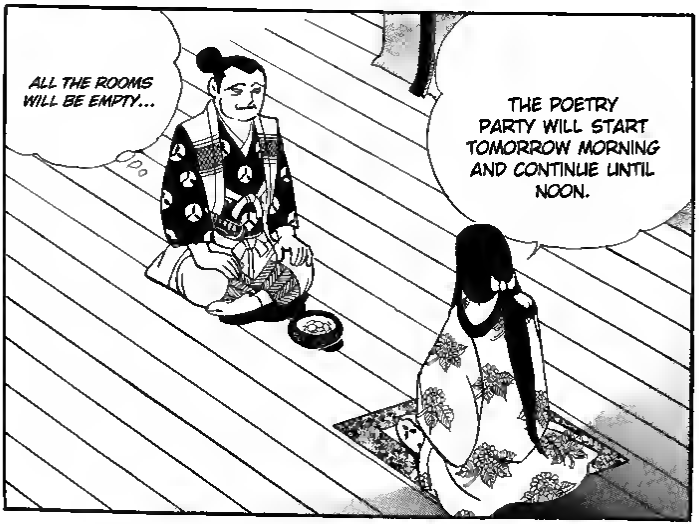
IMAGAWA...
PLEASE HELP YOURSELF. THESE ARE KYOTO-STYLE CONFECTIONS SENT BY LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO OF SURUGA
MY TALES ARE NOT FABRICATIONS!
WELL? ARE THEY NOT TASTY? THESE CONFECTIONS WERE FABRICATED, JUST AS YOUR TALES ..
SUWA YORISHIGE'S LETTER!?
BUT LORD SUWA YORISHIGE'S LETTER TELLS ANOTHER STORY. SO WHICH STORY IS A FABRICATION?

WHAT IS THE MATTER? YOU SEEM LOST IN THOUGHT.
HMM...
HEHE... I DARE SAY THAT LORD HARUNOBU SHOULD BE WORRIED.
THE TRUTH IS, THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTER LORD SUWA YORISHIGE SENT YOU WORRY ME
THAT IT DOES. BUT I CANNOT LET ANYONE ELSE SEE IT.
DOES IT SAY ANYTHING THAT LORD HARUNOBU SHOULD BE WORRIED ABOUT?
OH, YES. SPEAKING OF WHICH, THE LETTER FROM YOUR LORD, LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO, SHOULD WORRY LORD HARUNOBU EVEN MORE

OH, IS THAT SO? I HAD A FEELING THAT YOU WERE STILL THE GREATEST MESSENGER OF THE IMAGAWA CLAN.
MY LORD IS LORD TAKEDA HARUNOBU I SERVED LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO IN THE PAST, BUT NOW I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM.
SO THAT IS HOW SOCIETY SEES ME...
NO... I MUST...
IT IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU TO BE SO DEEP IN THOUGHT. WE WILL BE GATHERING THE LOCAL SAMURAI TOMORROW MORNING, AND HOLDING A POETRY PARTY IN THE MANSION HALL. WOULD YOU CARE TO JOIN US?

ALL MY CHAMBERMAIDS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE THERE. WHEN THIS MANSION HOLDS A POETRY PARTY, EVERYONE IS SO ENGROSSED IN IT THAT ALL THE OTHER ROOMS ARE EMPTY.


BUT I AM SURE YOU ARE TOO BUSY SPYING ON THE NEIGHBORING CASTLES TO WRITE POEMS, SO I WILL NOT FORCE YOU.

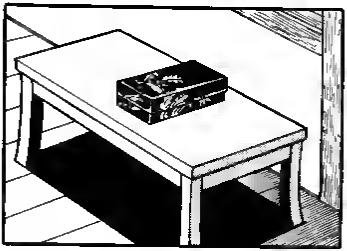

ALL THE ROOMS WILL BE EMPTY...
THE POETRY PARTY WILL START TOMORROW MORNING AND CONTINUE UNTIL NOON.

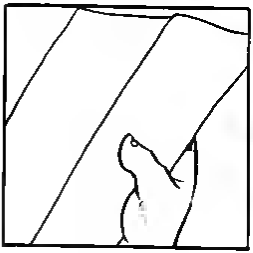
TAKEDA SHINGEN

TRANSLATED BY SYSTEMATICCHAOS
PROOFING BY ANGELOFCHAOTIX
EDITING BY HIGHTIDE
QC BY KAZUHIKO

CHAPTER 17

Chapter 18: Cruelty of the Warring States





THERE'S TWO LETTERS...
ONE FROM LORD SUWA, AND ONE FROM LORD IMAGAWA.
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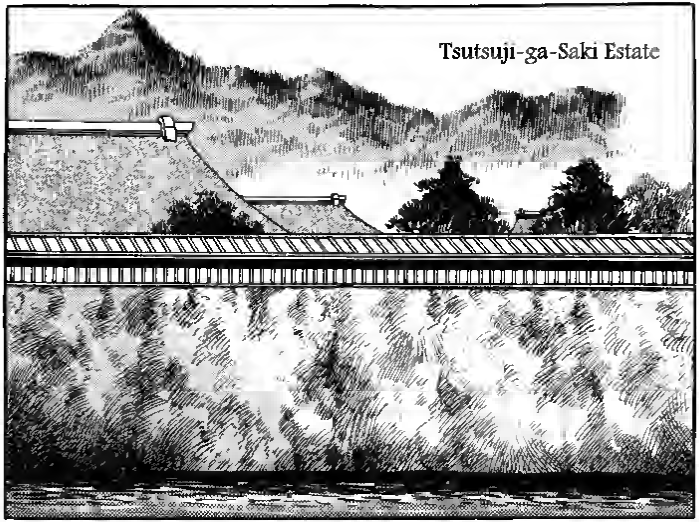
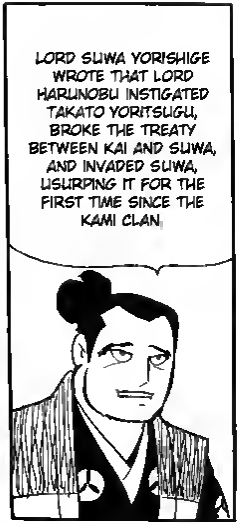

Tsutsuji-ga-Saki Estate

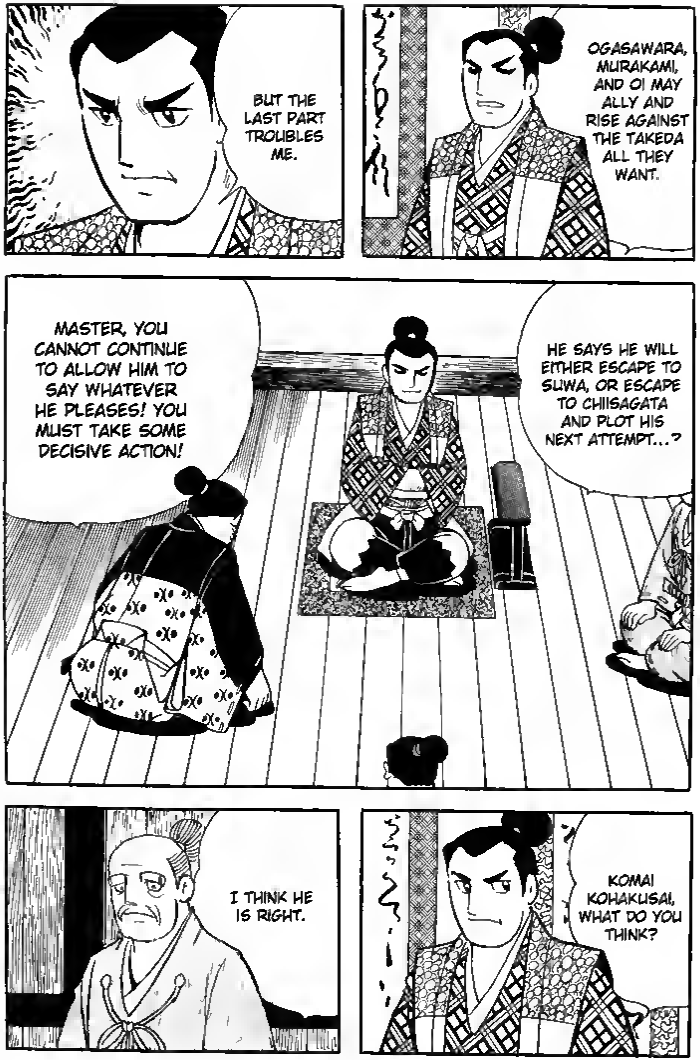
I SEE. SO LORD YORISHIGE HAD SENT A LETTER TO LADY SATOMI.
YES, MY LORD. AND IT WAS VERY DISQUIETING...

WHAT ELSE?


LORD SUWA YORISHIGE WROTE THAT LORD HARUNOBU INSTIGATED TAKATO YORITSUGU, BROKE THE TREATY BETWEEN KAI AND SUWA, AND INVADED SUWA, USURPING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE KAMI CLAN.

WHAT DID IT SAY?

HE SAID THAT OGASAWARA NAGATOKI, MURAKAMI YOSHINOBU, AND OI SADATAKA, LORD OF NAGAKUBO, ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THIS, AND WILL HASTILY JOIN FORCES TO ASSAULT THE TAKEDA, AND THAT WHEN THIS OCCURS, HE WILL DO ANYTHING IN HIS POWER TO RETURN TO SUWA, BUT IF HE CANNOT, HE WILL ESCAPE TO CHIISAGATA AND PLAN HIS NEXT ATTEMPT.

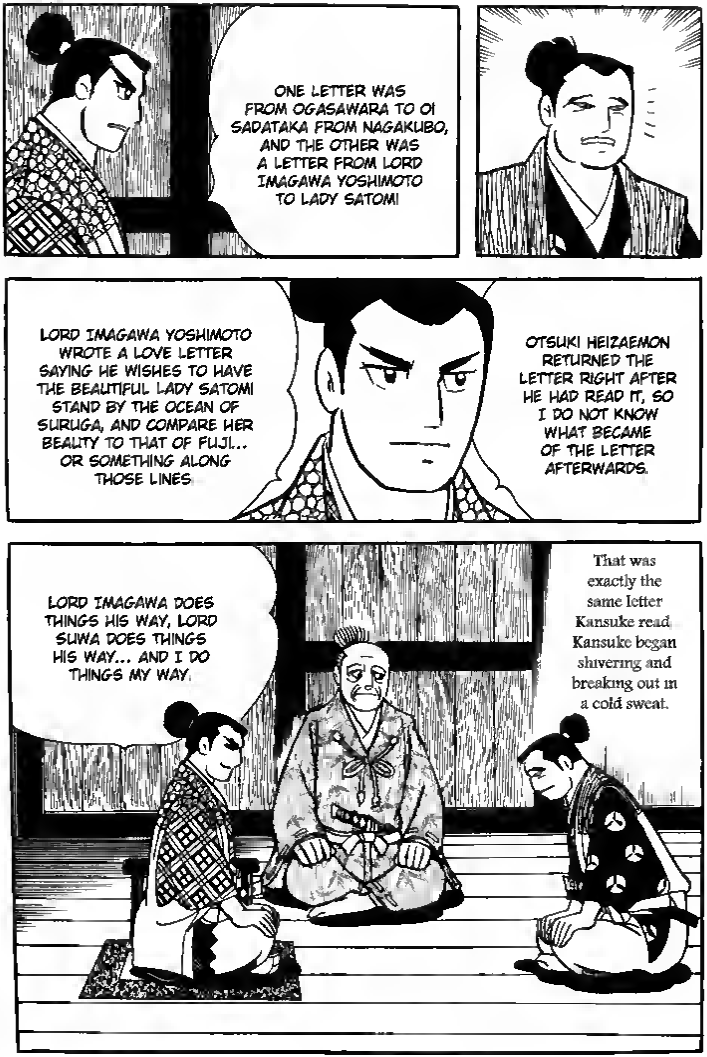

BUT THE LAST PART TROUBLES ME.
OGASAWARA, MURAKAMI, AND OI MAY ALLY AND RISE AGAINST THE TAKEDA ALL THEY WANT.
MASTER, YOU CANNOT CONTINUE TO ALLOW HIM TO SAY WHATEVER HE PLEASES! YOU MUST TAKE SOME DECISIVE ACTION!
HE SAYS HE WILL EITHER ESCAPE TO SUWA, OR ESCAPE TO CHIISAGATA AND PLOT HIS NEXT ATTEMPT...?
I THINK HE IS RIGHT.
KOMAI KOHAKUSAI, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

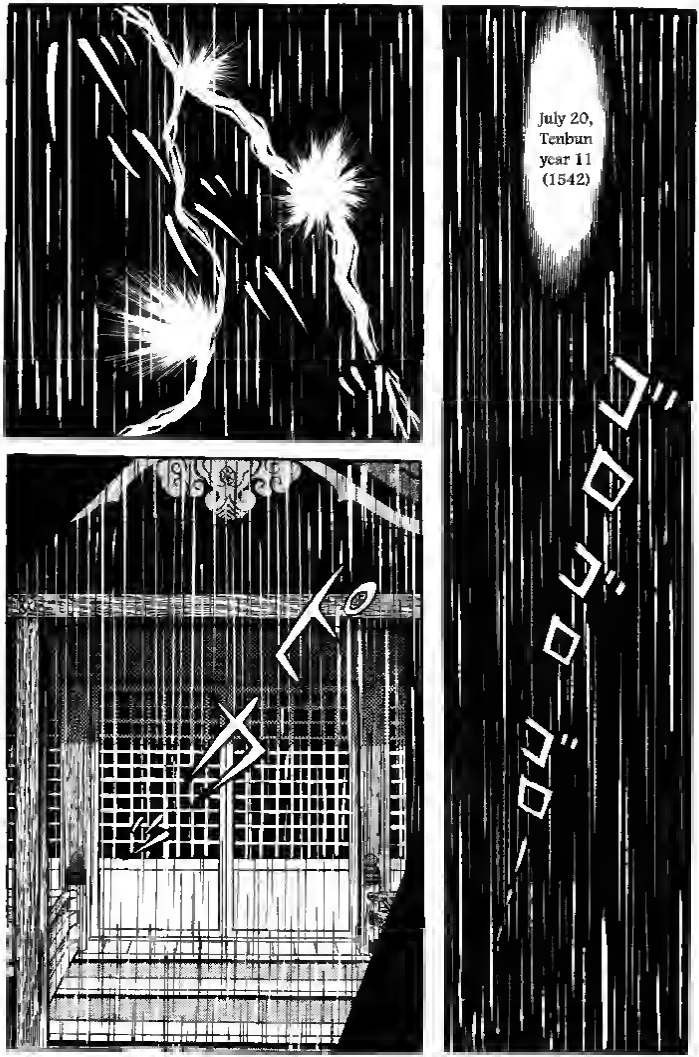
I HAVE OPENED A GATEWAY INTO SHINANO BY DESTROYING THE SUWA. I AM NOT AFRAID OF MAKING THE PROVINCE OF SHINANO MY ENEMY.
THE SUWA ARE DESCENDED FROM THE KAMI CLAN. BASED ON HOW YOU TREAT THE SUWA CLAN, YOU COULD MAKE THE ENTIRE PROVINCE OF SHINANO YOUR ENEMY.
I INTEND TO DESTROY MY ENEMIES. I CANNOT GIVE YORISHIGE MY PARDON IF HE STILL DEFIES THE TAKEDA WHILE IN CAPTURE.
SO YOU INTEND TO DEPOSE YORISHIGE...
BESIDES, TORAOH, THE LEGITIMATE SON BORN BY NENE, WILL BECOME THE SUCCESSOR OF THE SUWA CLAN, AND THE TAKEDA WILL SERVE AS HIS GUARDIAN.
YES, MY LORD!
YOU, GO TELL LORD YORISHIGE TO FALL ON HIS SWORD!

KANSUKE, DID YOU ONLY READ ONE LETTER?

YES, THERE WAS ONE, MY LORD.
WAS THERE A LOVE LETTER FROM LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO TO LADY SATOMI THERE?

YOU SEE, OTSUKI HEIZAEMON PURSUED A MESSENGER OF THE OGASAWARA CLAN, CAPTURED HIM RIGHT BEFORE NAGAKUBO OF CHIISAGATA, AND TOOK THE LETTERS HE WAS CARRYING.


ONE LETTER WAS FROM OGASAWARA TO OI SADATAKA FROM NAGAKUBO, AND THE OTHER WAS A LETTER FROM LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO TO LADY SATOMI
LORD IMAGAWA YOSHIMOTO WROTE A LOVE LETTER SAYING HE WISHES TO HAVE THE BEAUTIFUL LADY SATOMI STAND BY THE OCEAN OF SURUGA, AND COMPARE HER BEAUTY TO THAT OF FUJI... OR SOMETHING ALONG THOSE LINES.
OTSUKI HEIZAEMON RETURNED THE LETTER RIGHT AFTER HE HAD READ IT, SO I DO NOT KNOW WHAT BECAME OF THE LETTER AFTERWARDS.
LORD IMAGAWA DOES THINGS HIS WAY, LORD SUWA DOES THINGS HIS WAY... AND I DO THINGS MY WAY.
That was exactly the same letter Kansuke read. Kansuke began shivering and breaking out in a cold sweat.


July 20,
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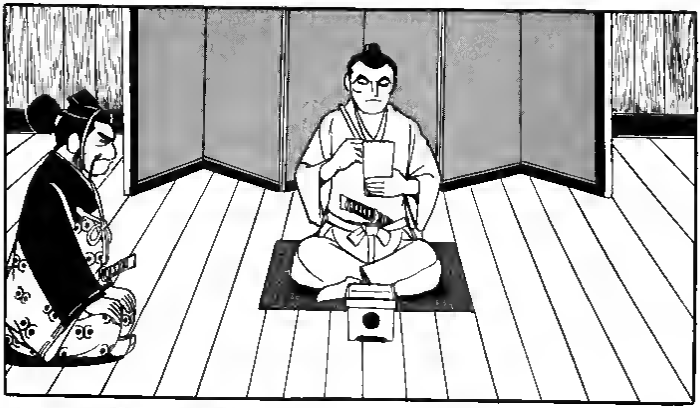
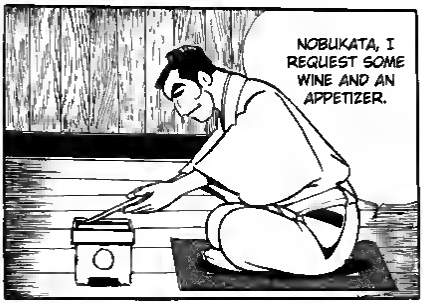


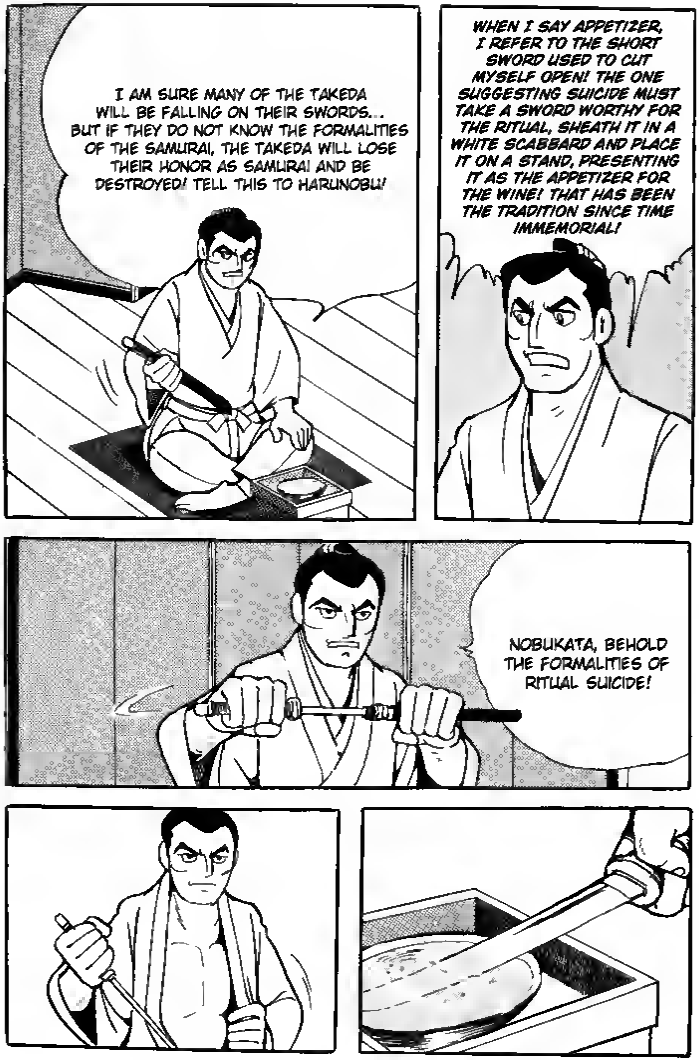

NOBUKATA, I REQUEST SOME WINE AND AN APPETIZER.

SOME WINE AND AN APPETIZER, YOU SAY?

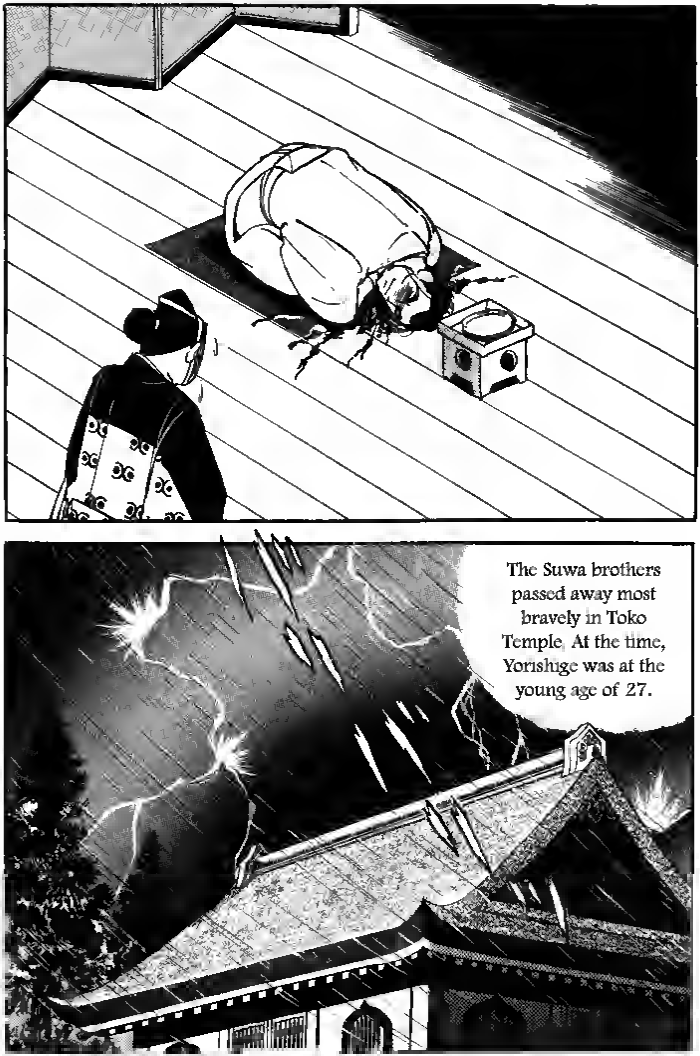
Though the blades of grass
Wither up and die
By their nature,
As long as I am lord,
They will grow again.

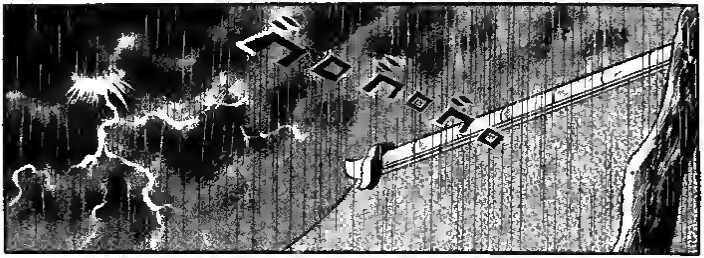
YES, SIR.
RITUAL SUICIDE IS THE ULTIMATE FORMALITY OF A SAMURAI. I WISH TO KEEP THAT FORMALITY.
YES, SIR.
YOU! BRING HIM SOME WINE AND AN APPETIZER!

HERE YOU ARE.
FOOL!
THIS IS A TEMPLE, SO THERE ARE NO APPETIZERS YOU WILL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH JUST THE WINE.
NOBUKATA, WHERE IS THE APPETIZER?
NOBUKATA, YOU ARE ONE OF THE VETERANS THAT BEARS THE TAKEDA CLAN! YOU SHOULD AT LEAST KNOW THE FORMALITIES OF RITUAL SUICIDE! IF YOU ARE VICTORIOUS IN WAR BUT KNOW NOT THE FORMALITIES OF SAMURAI, THEN YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN BANDITS!


I AM SURE MANY OF THE TAKEDA WILL BE FALLING ON THEIR SWORDS... BUT IF THEY DO NOT KNOW THE FORMALITIES OF THE SAMURAI, THE TAKEDA WILL LOSE THEIR HONOR AS SAMURAI AND BE DESTROYED! TELL THIS TO HARUNOBU!
WHEN I SAY APPETIZER, I REFER TO THE SHORT SWORD USED TO CUT MYSELF OPEN! THE ONE SUGGESTING SUICIDE MUST TAKE A SWORD WORTHY FOR THE RITUAL, SHEATH IT IN A WHITE SCABBARD AND PLACE IT ON A STAND, PRESENTING IT AS THE APPETIZER FOR THE WINE! THAT HAS BEEN THE TRADITION SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL!
NOBUKATA, BEHOLD THE FORMALITIES OF RITUAL SUICIDE!

At the time, ritual suicide was not done easily with an assistant First, a cross was cut into the stomach
And lastly, the sword was stabbed under the right nipple.


The Suwa brothers passed away most bravely in Toko Temple. At the time, Yorishige was at the young age of 27.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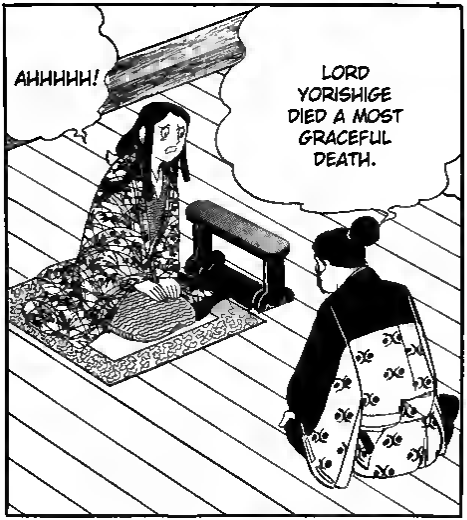
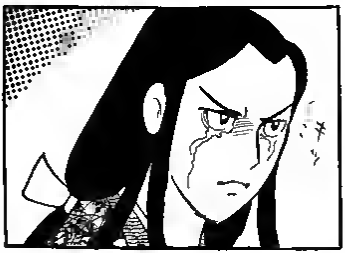
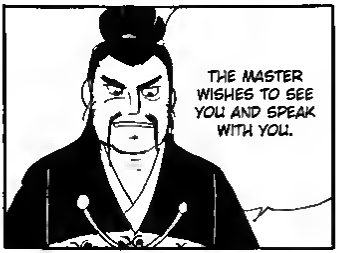
AUUUU
UGHHH!


AHHHHH!
LORD YORISHIGE DIED A MOST GRACEFUL DEATH.



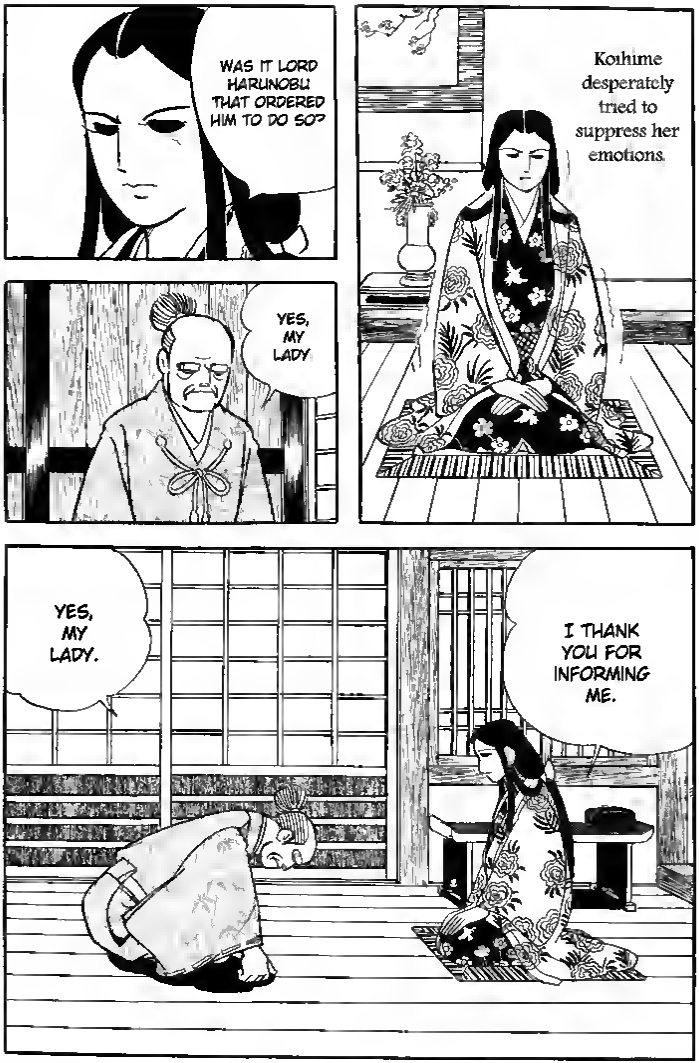

THE MASTER WISHES TO SEE YOU AND SPEAK WITH YOU.

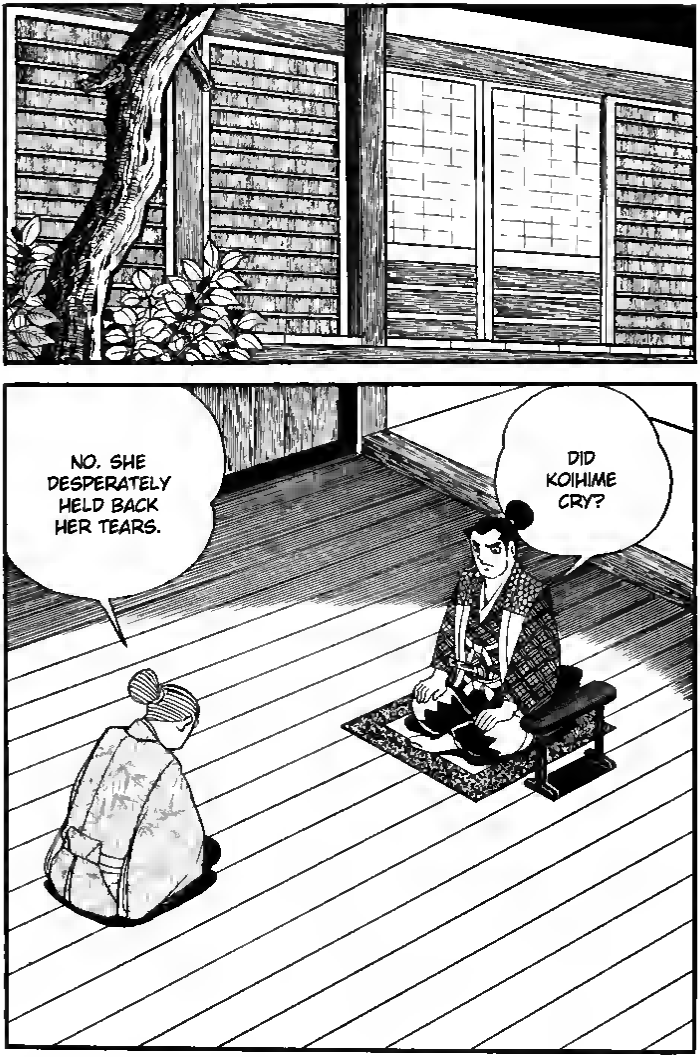
I AM THE WIFE OF SUWA YORISHIGE! ANY BROTHER WHO SAYS HE WILL SPARE MY HUSBAND AND TAKE HIM TO KOFU JUST SO HE COULD KILL HIM IS NO BROTHER OF MINE! I REFUSE TO SPEAK WITH HIM!
I WILL CURSE MY BROTHER AND LOATHE THE TAKEDA UNTIL THE DAY I AM SIDE BY SIDE WITH MY HUSBAND YORISHIGE!
AHHHHHHHH!

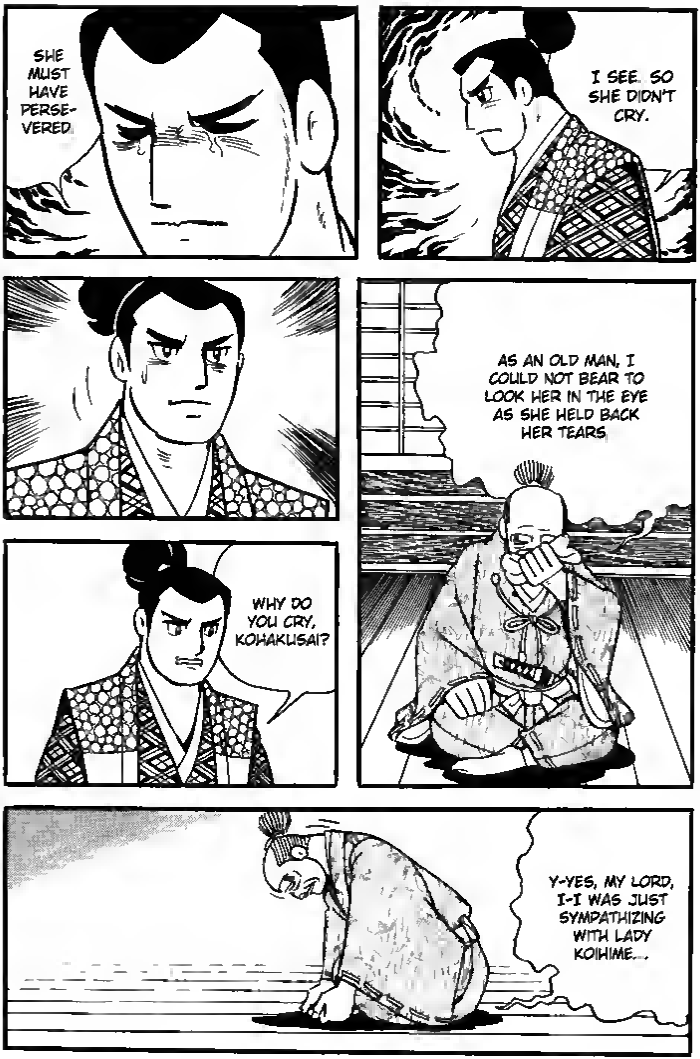
Her maids tried to force her to eat, but she only ate minimal amounts of food
From that day on, Nene refuse to eat, insisting that she would not eat the food of her enemies, the Takeda.
Nene died at the beginning of the next year, so thin she was a mere shadow of her former self Nene was simply one of the misfortunate women of the Warring States.

The next day...
Kohakusai went to visit Koihime.

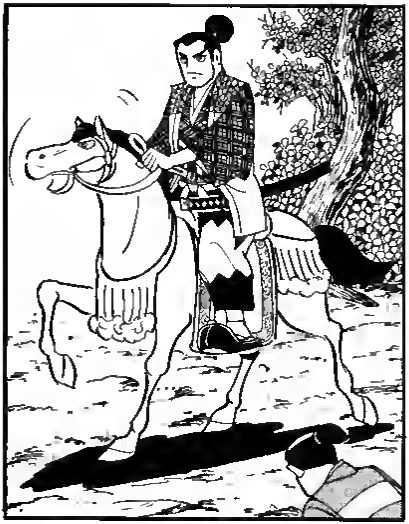
YES, MY LADY
IS THIS IN REGARDS TO MY FATHER?
LAST EVENING, LORD YORISHIGE ENDED HIS LIFE MOST SPECTACULARLY IN TOKO TEMPLE.
WHAT ABOUT MY FATHER?

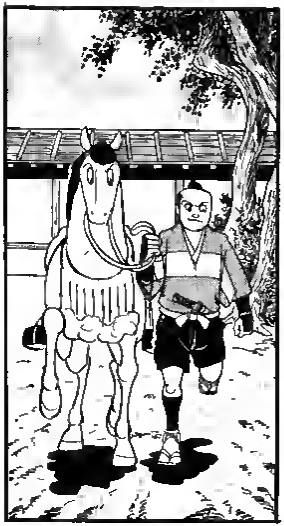

WAS IT LORD HARUNOBU THAT ORDERED HIM TO DO SO?
YES, MY LADY.
Kohime desperately tried to suppress her emotions.
YES, MY LADY.
I THANK YOU FOR INFORMING ME.

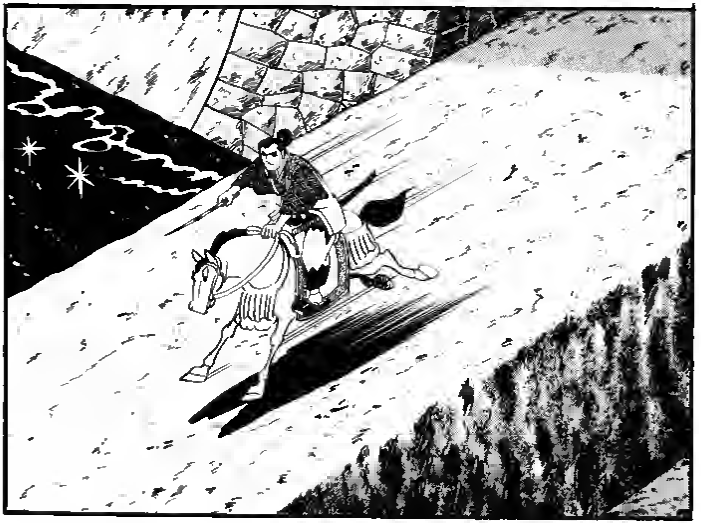

DID KOIHIME CRY?
NO. SHE DESPERATELY HELD BACK HER TEARS.

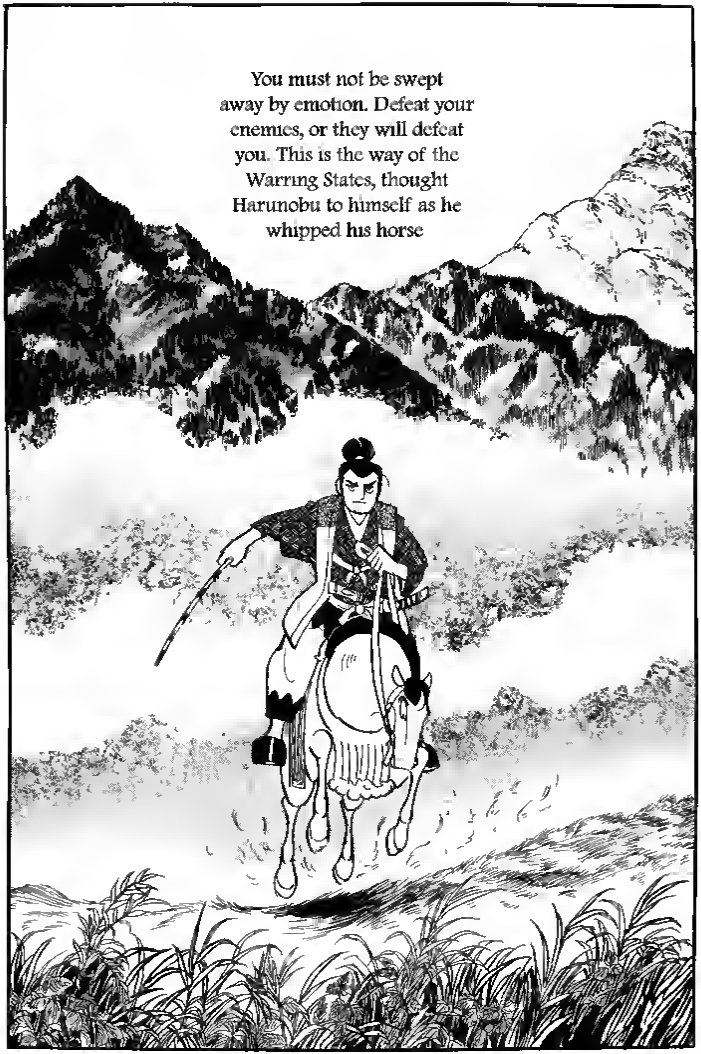

SHE MUST HAVE PERSE-VERED.
I SEE. SO SHE DIDN'T CRY.
AS AN OLD MAN, I COULD NOT BEAR TO LOOK HER IN THE EYE AS SHE HELD BACK HER TEARS.
WHY DO YOU CRY, KOHAKUSAI?
Y-YES, MY LORD, I-I WAS JUST SYMPATHIZING WITH LADY KOIHIME...

THIS IS THE AGE OF WARRING STATES! THERE IS NO PLACE FOR TEARS! NOT EVEN KOIHIME SHED ANY TEARS!
YES, MY LORD.
I WILL GO FOR A RIDE.
BRING ME A HORSE!



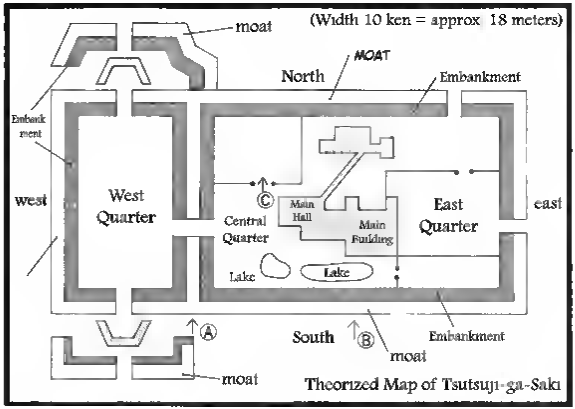





You must not be swept
away by emotion. Defeat your
enemies, or they will defeat
you. This is the way of the
Warring States, thought
Harunobu to himself as he
whipped his horse

Cruelty of the Warring States – END

Takeda Shingen Scrapbook – 3
Tsutsuji-ga-Saki Estate –
The Takeda Cornerstone for Three Generations



Takeda Nobutora built an estate for the guardian of Kai in Eisho year 16 (1519), when he was twenty-six, to found his headquarters in Kofu. This was Tsutsuji-ga-Saki Estate, which would become the keystone of Koshu for 63 years and three generations, including Harunobu and Katsuyori.
After Nobutora's exile, Harunobu, the new lord of Kai, lived by the saying "Your men are your walls, your men are your castle", and never built a single castle within Kai. With the Imagawa and Hojo confronting him to the south, and the threat of Shinano behind him, this was truly astonishing. This was only possible through outstanding leadership, and unyielding trust in his retainers, and is an excellent example that speaks of Harunobu's rare greatness as a general.
Tsutsuji-ga-Saki Estate was not a castle, but its construction was comparable to a samurai's estate, and it was said to appear more or less like a noble's mansion. It had a fitting atmosphere for Harunobu, who in his later years admired Zen and poetry, but with Mt. Yogai behind it, and overlooking the Kofu Basin to the south, it was a natural stronghold, and with deep moats and embankments, it was able to last in pristine condition to modern times, where it has become Takeda Shrine.
After the death of Shingen, his son Katsuyori built Shinpu Castle in Nirasaki, the first genuine castle in Kai, but he was defeated there without a fight by the Oda and Tokugawa coalition army, and so people would later see this as ironic as this was the first beacon of the Takeda's destruction.

Photograph from location A in the remains of Tsutsuji-ga-Saki

Photograph from location B

Photograph from location C

Takeda Shingen Scrapbook – 4
Suwa Yorishige – Bloodline from the Age of the Gods

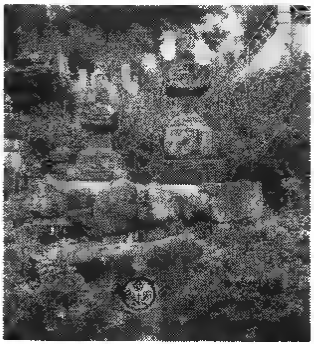
View of Lake Suwa from the remains of Uehara Castle

Harunobu's capture of Shinano began in Tenbun year 11 (1542), with the march on Suwa, a key point in South Shinano. This land, with the holy Suwa Grand Shrine beside Lake Suwa, was ruled by the Suwa Clan who served as chief priests of the upper shrine since the age of the gods, and was the envy of the surrounding clans.

At first, the clans were bonded by an alliance through the marriage of Harunobu's sister Nene, but an internal strife between the twelfth lord of the Head Suwa Clan and his relative Takato Yoritsugu gave the Takeda Army the chance to invade Suwa. Though the Suwa Clan took pride in their blood and held the natural fortresses of Uehara and Kuwabara Castles, the successive estrangement of allied provinces caused them to lose their will to fight, until they had no choice but to surrender.

Yorishige, who was sent to Kofu as an actual hostage, was suddenly charged with treason on July 21 of that year, and committed ritual suicide. Thus, the noble Suwa Clan perished. Yorishige's grave still remains where he fell on his sword, at Toko Temple in Kofu City, but next to it huddles the grave of Nene, who was wed to the Suwa at a young age and followed her husband in death, calling for the tears of visitors.

Sightseeing stone remaining near the main quarter of Uehara Castle



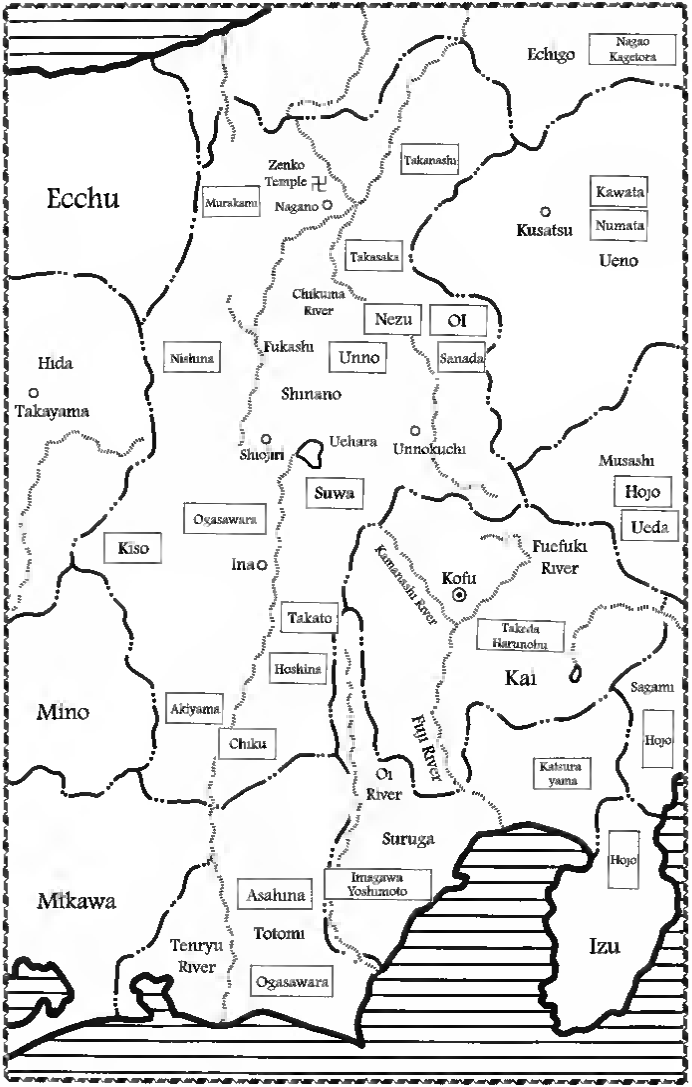
Grave of Yorishige in Toko Temple, Kofu City. To the left is the grave of Lady Nene

Remains of Kuwabara Castle, branch of Uehara Castle

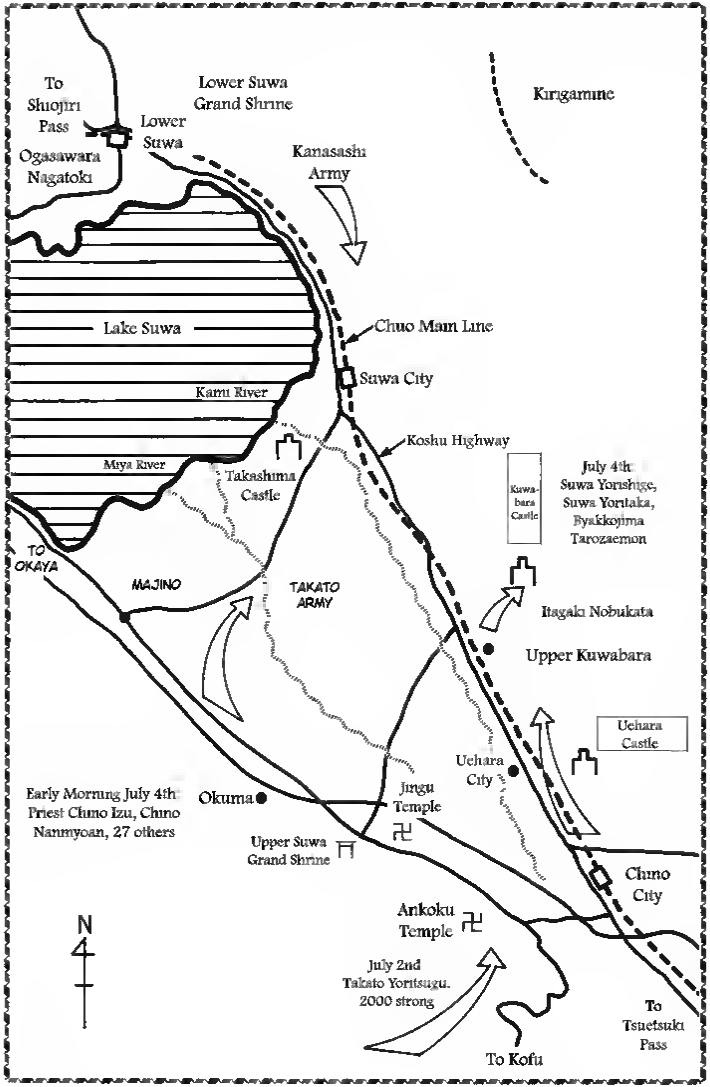
Inner Sanctuary of Upper Suwa Shrine

Photography by Taniyama Shinichiro

The Clans of Shinano



Tenbun year 11 (1542)
Map of the Invasion of Suwa



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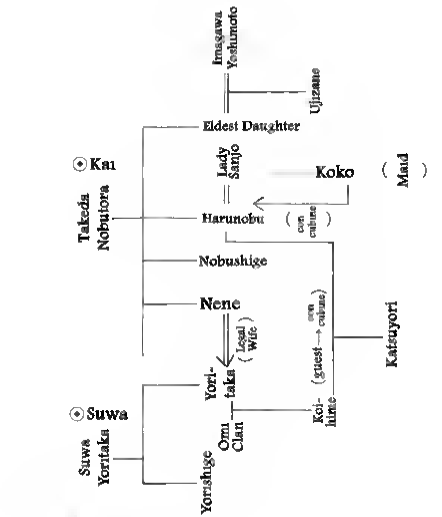

Suwa Shrine — High Priest Mansei
Lower Shrine — Kanasashi Takanobu

⊙Ina = Takato Yoritsugu
Chiku Yorimoto

⊙Shinano = Ogasawara Nagatoki

⊙Chikuzata:
Unno Castle — Unno Munetsuna
Nezu Castle — Nezu Motonao —— Satomi
Nagakubo Castle — Oi Sadataka

☆ (Imagawa Retainers) Takama Gorobei

☆ (Imagawa and Takeda Double Agent) Yamamoto Kansuke

☆ (Takeda Retainers)

Itagaki Nobukata – Isawa Jinzaburo/Shiotsu Yohei, Amari Torayasu, Furukawa Koheita, Tachiki Sengen, Obu Hyobu, Kamata Goro

(Former Magistrates)
Imai Hyobu, Kamata Jurozaemon, Saegusa Hanbei, Hinata Saburoshiro

(Kurashinas)
Kurashina Saburozaemon, Genkuro, Jubei

☆ (Suwa Retainers)
Priest Chino Izu, Chino Nanmeian, Byakkojima Tarozaemon

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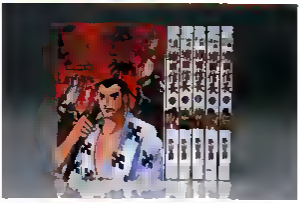

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CHAPTER 18